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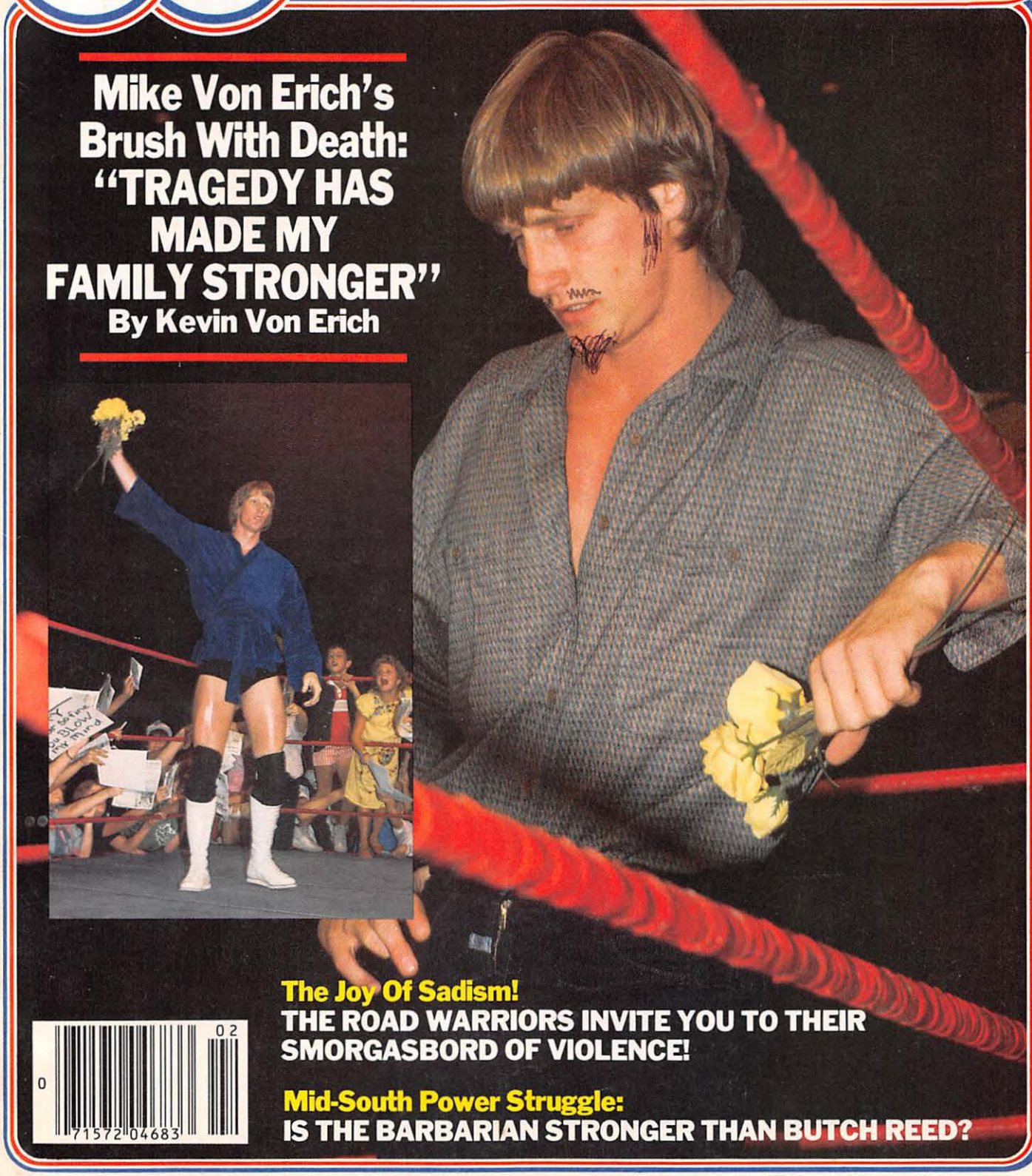
PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

T.V. SPORTS

Mike Von Erich's Brush With Death: "TRAGEDY HAS MADE MY FAMILY STRONGER"

By Kevin Von Erich



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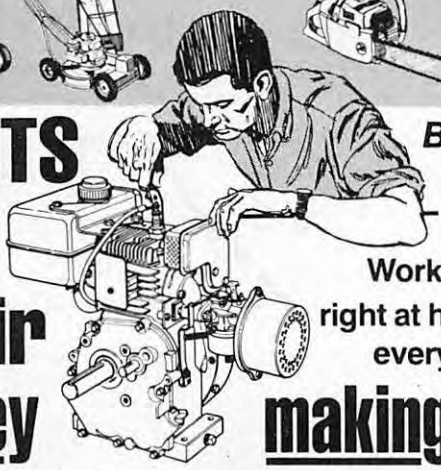

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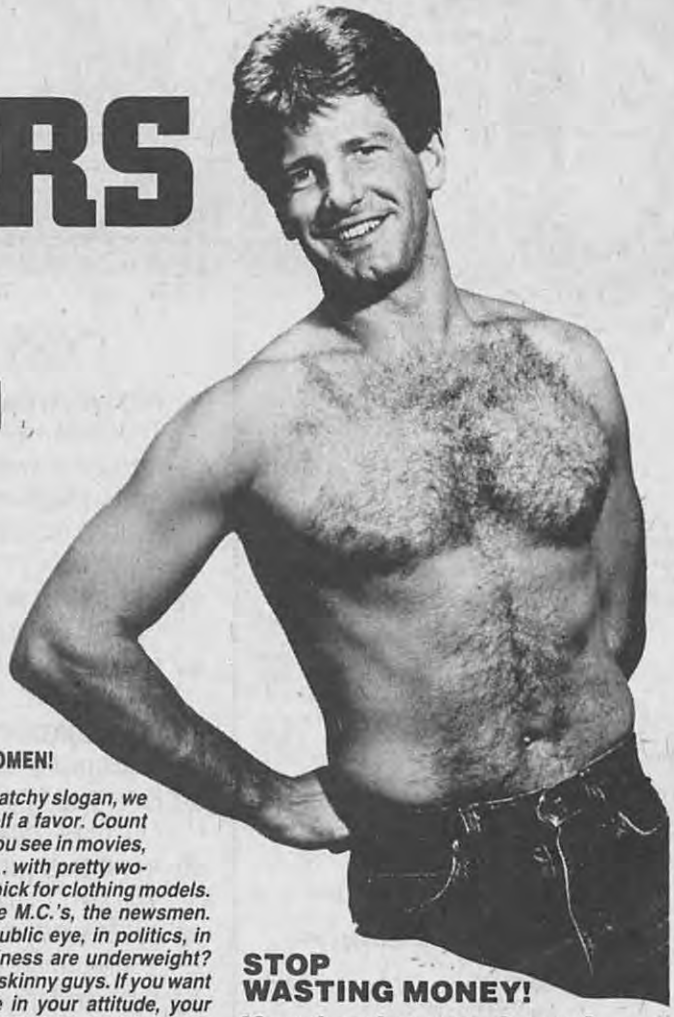

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That's what so many men are saying after using *ShapeUp*, the marvelous, new compound, especially formulated by nutritionists, sports dietitians and biochemists for the sole purpose of helping men to more healthful, sturdier and better developed bodies.

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SKINNY ISN'T ATTRACTIVE

If you don't think so, just watch what turns women's heads on the beach. They get turned on by well-built guys. They're the ones with the prettiest girls. It's a rare fellow who doesn't want to look good in his clothes and is happy with a skinny frame, who has not envied men who weighed a little more, had a better appetite and generally displayed a physical fitness that spoke of health and well-being. True, while doctors and nutrition specialists warn against being fat, very little is said about the equal or greater evils of being underweight. So there's more to it than cosmetic aspects. Skinny is not only unattractive. It is also unhealthful. Gaining weight could mean gaining health for you.

GAIN STAMINA AND SELF-CONFIDENCE TOO.

Skinny men are not great lovers. That's a known fact. Add a few pounds and you'll be amazed how it will improve your love-life. Women know this and are conscious of the fact that skinny men can't go the distance. The race is to the strong, the saying goes. And the fellow who is handsomest doesn't look like a stand-in for the family skeleton. Many a man found that gaining a few more pounds has helped him overcome chronic illness, major or minor. Many a doctor has prescribed gaining weight. But so little is publicized about skinny men. The great amount of publicity given to coronary problems has brought the bulk of weight attention to those men who weigh too much. Men who weigh too little never really get equal time. But their problem is no less serious.

GAIN WEIGHT! GAIN WOMEN!

If you think that's just a catchy slogan, we hope you will do yourself a favor. Count how many skinny men you see in movies, or on TV or anywhere . . . with pretty women. Notice whom they pick for clothing models. See the announcers, the M.C.'s, the newsmen. How many men in the public eye, in politics, in leadership roles in business are underweight? Not even astronauts are skinny guys. If you want to experience a change in your attitude, your business progress, your lifestyle, see what 5, 10, 15 pounds can do for you. See how it adds to your personal esteem, your confidence and, best of all, your well-being. Your day will come . . . and thank your lucky stars, it's within sight with ShapeUp *working for you.*

LOOK BETTER AND FEEL BETTER WHILE YOU GAIN

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Some fellows, who've been trying hard to gain weight, resort to all sorts of methods to do so: professional exercise sessions, costly nutritional regimens, large investments in health foods, time-consuming weight-building programs. Yet, here, at an extremely affordable price, you are offered a product so elementary, so easy-to-take, yet so effective we offer it to you without any greater effort than filling out and mailing a coupon. You don't even have to go to a store for it. And unlike any other method, product, means or procedure, we GUARANTEE *ShapeUp* to the point of total freedom from risk of any kind.

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MICHAEL HAYES AND THE FREEBIRDS NEW HIT SINGLE!

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THE GREAT AMERICAN BASH

The Great American Bash was a good wrestling show, about that there can be no doubt. But when you begin to compare it with WrestleMania, it loses most of its shine. WrestleMania can never be duplicated. Never will a wrestling match capture the imagination of an entire country like WrestleMania did. Fans around the country were captivated by our sport. The media was seduced by the glamorous images of Hulk Hogan, Paul Orndorff, Roddy Piper, Cyndi Lauper, Wendi Richter, and Mr. T. And the wrestling could not have been beaten, both in terms of competence and energy. Where else in the country would Rick Steamboat wrestle in the opening match? Where else would Andre the Giant become a marginal attraction? Do the Bash a favor. Let it stand as an exciting card of wrestling, but don't embarrass it with unfathomable comparisons. WrestleMania it wasn't. Nothing ever was.

PRO
Wrestling
ILLUSTRATED
Flair vs. Nikita: MATCH OF THE YEAR?
Dusty vs. Tully: RAGE IN A CAGE!
THE GREAT AMERICAN BASH
Koloff & Khrushchev vs. Road Warriors: IN DEFENSE OF AMERICA!
Kamala vs. Magnum: T.A. THE GIANT KILLER!

SEBASTIAN JONES
Kansas City, MO

As I sat in my 20th row seat and watched the Great American Bash unfold before my wide open eyes, I said a little prayer for Jim Crockett Promotions and asked God to thank him for putting on such a spectacular show. With people getting ripped off all the time by unscrupulous people I think it entirely commendable that Mr. Crockett could put together a card of such talent and competitiveness. Every match was incredible. The action was incomparable. The music was riveting. There is no better wrestling in the country than in the NWA, and the Great American Bash confirmed that with the finality of a big claw hammer bashing in a four-inch nail. Take that same hammer and you could lay waste to every other promotion in the country. Thank God for the NWA.

ARETHA JEFFERSON
Woods Pt., NC

WANTS-A MORE—A VENTURA

Loved your color centerfold of Jesse "The Body" Ventura in January's *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*. Jesse is the heppest cat in wrestling today. I'd love to give him some skin, daddy, and let him know that his slickness is fully appreciated by fans of similiar personality origin. Anybody who can plant a pair of togs around his thighs the color of Jesse's is a man who hoots at public opinion. Forget the drummer, Jesse trots to the beat of a different *band*.

Now, my one complaint is that the public now knows what Jesse looks like, but unless they tune in to the WWF shows they aren't aware of the fundamental and vast compendium of knowledge, wisdom, and wit that is the man. My only wish is that Jesse would run for the congressonal seat in my district, then I would know that my interests are squarely represented. Therefore, I suggest that your intrepid staff hasten to interview Mr. Ventura or at least perform us the service of a feature-length story. Of course, if your wish was increased

(Continued on page 46)

PWI could not provide enough coverage of Jesse Ventura for Alex Rey's taste.

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There are all kinds of ways to make money. Good golly, Molly — if anyone knows that, I do! For the past 20+ years I've concentrated on finding, investigating, creating and specifically singling out only the very finest legal and ethical methods for carving out a mass of wealth in a hurry. But believe me, in all those years never have I experienced anything remotely as exciting as this one!

Recently, I came across a fairly new way to make big bux, but after a thorough study I discarded it because it required too much investment of time, money and personal effort. But my study did serve as inspiration to develop yet another fantastic and unusual wallet-fattener — **something that until now has never been done** — yet fully complies with the tough set of standards I'm noted for demanding of *any* potential wealth-producing concept:

- Must be able to be started with **minimum investment**
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- Must be able to be started and **run initially by one man or woman**
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Well, this one goes way beyond my usual rigorous test. Get this: This extra-ordinary money-maker® allows you to:

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- Have a potential **net profit** (not gross ... **net!**) of $100,000.00 by the end of 90 days — tops. And that's **cash**, not theoretical or paper profits.

Naturally, you're wondering what all this is — but I'm not going to tell you here. No, it's going to cost you ten smackers to find out. But I will tell you what it *isn't* so you'll not be off on some wild goose chase:

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- ★ No party-plan, door-to-door or phone selling
- ★ No catalogs, mailing lists, postage, etc.
- ★ No equipment to buy or rent
- ★ No bothering friends, relatives, etc.
- ★ Not anything you have ever seen advertised anywhere

For the past two decades Du Vall has captured the imagination of men and women the world over by providing solid, unique direction for their quest for financial freedom. His firm is headquartered in Michigan with international marketing offices in Hong Kong (known as DAX International, John W. Lane, President). In addition to producing some three dozen publications on money-making/self-improvement themes, DuVall is also the creator of the popular Derek Dax adventure/mystery/romance series and the author of the political intrigue novel, "The Big Dream" (published by Lyle Stuart, Inc., New York). Unlike most, he has never had to resort to outlandish money-back guarantees to attract only the finest DAX-DOERS worldwide and no such policy is expressed or implied.

His writings have been used in numerous style and content workshops and accredited courses at such institutions as California State University, UCLA, Fordham, University of Illinois and Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

WHO CAN DO IT

Anyone with even a smidgen of ambition.

WHAT IS REQUIRED

Other than my step-by-step detailed report ... nothing. I have thought long and hard about it; A person virtually without a shirt on their back or a pot to plant petunias in could do it. You will of course, have to put my plan into motion — but that's both fun and easy and totally accomplished from the comfort of your own home. (By the way, no one will be coming to your home, either.)

Finally, let me make this clear: Once you have my report, **that is all you need to get going!** I have nothing else to sell you for this deal. Your purchase of this extraordinary report is NOT a "foot in the door" to get you to buy some extra or expensive "course" or whatever ... this is all you need from me!

WANT PROOF?

We have over 10,000 'tasty testimonials' from housewives, doctors, lawyers, layed-off factory workers—all sorts of good people. These excerpts sum up their feelings:

"Thanks a million times . . . you have proved 100% accurate in what you said in your advertisement. Doing this work is so easy! I sometimes work while in bed. Should you come up with another ingenious thing, please let me know.
Mohidin Mohammed, Sweden

"We are so impressed . . . have our 13 and 16 year olds involved . . . thanks for giving our family new hope."
MacClear Family, Indiana

". . . man in economically depressed area left $35,000 secure job to put this method to work . . . made $120,000. First man I've ever met who really made money on idea purchased through mail." David Roman, Editor, ROMAN REPORTS, Ohio

WHAT TO DO NOW

You've got two choices:

1. Put this ad aside, wait 90 days or so and perhaps lose your chance at $100,000.
2. Do the only sensible thing. Send me the ten bux and get started on wearing in that path to the bank.

Nifty Bonus!

A few months back in our DAX MONEY-MAKER® CONFIDENTIAL NEWSLETTER, we reported on another business that can easily net $1,000 a week for life. It's a bit more involved and does require getting out and about, but our readers were so delighted with it that I'm including it as an extra **free bonus** when you order our new special DAX report, "$100,000 in 90 Days."

P.S. One more thing (say, this Du Vall is a windy so and so, isn't he!). There are lots of people right now in bad financial straits. I hope you're not one of them, but if you are, having read this ad you now have absolutely no excuse for being broke, because as the saying goes, "This is it!" This could truly be the once-and-for-all solution to any money miseries you have. I guess you'll have to take my word for it until you receive these fabulous reports — but if it eases your mind any, over 1,000,000 men and women worldwide have been, over the years **repeat buyers** of my books, courses, reports, cassette tape programs and newsletters. There must be a reason . . .

— Dean F. V. Du Vall

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RINGSIDE

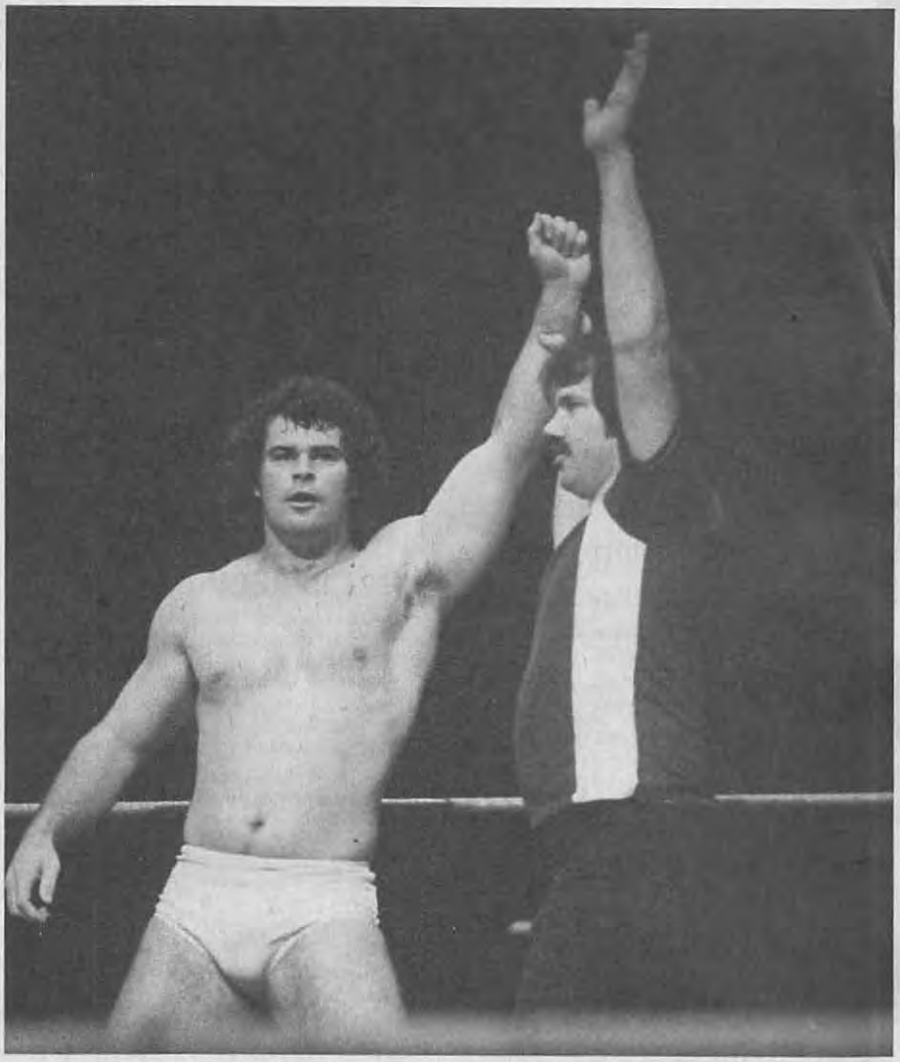
With Bill Apter

LAST ISSUE I reported that **Gino Hernandez** captured the World Class Texas title from **Brian Adidas** on Labor Day. Well, Gino's title reign didn't last too long—Adidas regained the belt on September 27 in Dallas, cutting Hernandez's title reign abruptly short at only 25 days.

"Actually, I consider this a bigger victory than when I won the Texas belt from Gino the first time back on July 29," Adidas told **Pro Wrestling Illustrated.** "See, this victory means that Hernandez is not capable of holding on to a belt anymore. Gino's star is fading, and this is just the beginning for me. I intend to hold on to this title for a long, long time."

Hernandez refused to comment on the match, but his tag team partner and co-holder of the World Class tag team championship, **Chris Adams**, had this to say:

"Gino's not about to fold by any stretch of the imagination. I know that he'll be able to bounce back and put that pesky brat Adidas in his place. The only way Brian is going to hold on to the Texas belt in 1986 is if he steals it from Gino! Actually, I feel kind of sorry for Brian. He's being brainwashed by the Von Erichs in exactly the same way I was. It's too bad. But that's what **Kerry** and **Kevin Von Erich** can do to a person. I know—they did it to me."



Brian Adidas recaptured the World Class Texas title from Gino Hernandez after only 25 days. Brian concurrently holds a share of the World Class six-man title with Kevin and Kerry Von Erich.

The Mongolian Stomper is the new Mid-Southern International heavyweight champion, having defeated **Phil Hickerson** in Memphis ... **Percy Pringle** is boasting a new find in the Florida area: **Lugar**, who stands 6'4" and weighs 270 pounds. Pringle intends to use him as a tag team partner for Southern heavyweight champion **Rick Rude** ... **Tommy Rogers** and **Bobby Fulton—The Fantastics**—are headed back to the World Class area. "Our fans begged us to return," Rogers said, "and besides, it looks like Hernandez and Adams' tag team belts are ripe for the picking!"

Sam Houston was hospitalized with a mild concussion resulting from an attack by **Ole** and **Arn Anderson** and **Tully Blanchard**. Following matches in Shelby, North Carolina, Houston was surrounded by fans in a

(Continued on page 55)

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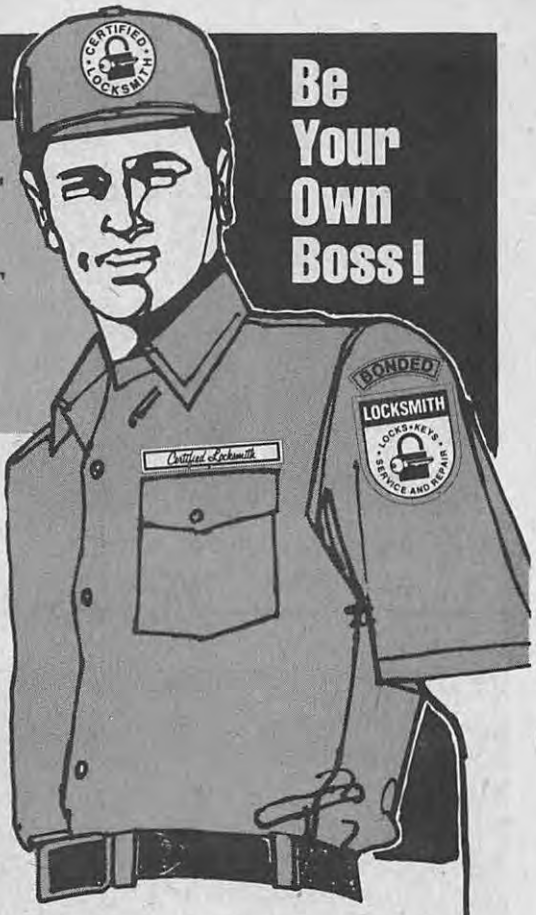

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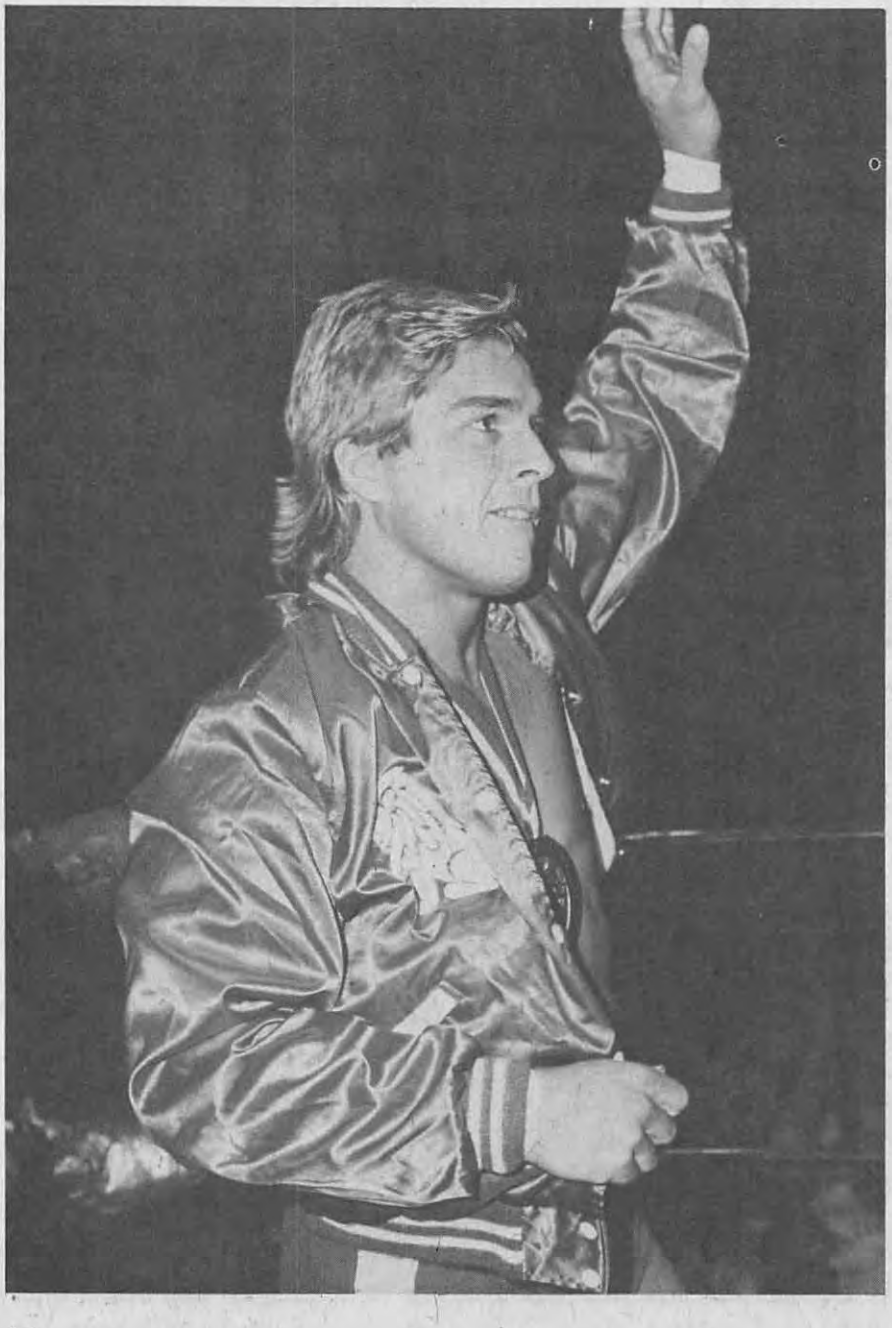
KING'S COURT

By Peter King



IT'S BEEN ANOTHER month of fast-breaking news. Let's take a step back and try to put some recent events into perspective:

● **Terry Taylor Wins National Title:** Is there any truth to the rumor that where Magnum T.A. goes, Terry Taylor follows? First, T.A. was a big success in the Mid-South area, and soon Taylor entered that territory. Earlier this year, T.A. journeyed to the World Championship area, and now he has been joined by Taylor.

Some insight into the two men's friendship can by found by reading "Press Conference" beginning on page 24. But despite the sunny views given out by Taylor, I suspect there are some stormy days ahead.

Terry and Magnum are in direct competition, even more than T.A. and Ric Flair are. Terry and Magnum compete not only for the same titles, but for the same fans. And that's where problems may arise.

Wrestlers are big men with even bigger egos. Often, their first question to a reporter after a match isn't "How did I look?" but "What type of reaction did I get?" If Taylor should start to receive a bigger "reaction" from fans than T.A., it may be the start of trouble.

It has been said that no two men hate each other as much as enemies who were once friends. I hope this doesn't prove true with Magnum T.A. and Terry Taylor, because both are quality young men who bring honor to this sport.

● **Tito Santana Turns Back Randy Savage:** Santana is the bright story of 1985—a man who looked as if his career was finished but who has returned better than ever. Successful defenses of his Intercontinental title are no longer newsworthy; Tito Santana has proved he is one of the finest wrestlers in the sport. He rises above the current crop of WWF circus performers like a rose floating on a polluted pond.

(Continued on page 62)

Terry Taylor is enjoying new heights of popularity since winning the National title.

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DRESSING CONFIDENTIAL ROOM

By Stu Saks

RIC FLAIR IS to the 1980s as John Travolta was to the 1970s and Abbie Hoffman was to the 1960s. Each was a reflection of his time. Flair is the world champion yuppie. He is of the opinion that whatever he does in life is justified by his position as NWA World heavyweight champion. He's fond of saying things like: "This is the 1980s. People love a winner. Ric Flair is a winner."

Granted, Flair is the dominant force of the NWA and I don't see anybody on the horizon who is going to seriously challenge that position. Is he a winner? Certainly. Is he going to be revered by the wrestling community for as long as he continues to be a winner? Well, I guess that all depends on how many wrestling fans are yuppies.

Mention the word "yuppie" to Dusty Rhodes and his face will scrunch up and he'll say, "Huh?" He doesn't know from words like that. Rhodes doesn't believe in classifying people. There are good people and there are bad people. Good people do good things for other people. Bad people do whatever they feel is necessary in order to make things good for themselves.

Dusty Rhodes will be the first person to admit that he has a tendency to misjudge people. If there is any doubt, he'll give his fellow man the benefit of his uncertainty. He has seen the bad side of many of the people whom he now numbers among his best friends in the world. Until recently, Ric Flair was one of them.

Dusty Rhodes has had enough wars with Ric Flair to know that this man could never be a friend. But Dusty believes in giving second chances. Sometimes his faith in mankind can be very dangerous.

Rhodes and Flair have had some brutal confrontations over the years. By most people's standards, they should never have been in a position where their friendship should have had the opportunity to come to a tragic conclusion, as it recently did. There should have been no friendship at all.

From Flair's standpoint, there was no friendship. People like Flair don't know the true meaning of the word. A friend to Ric Flair is a person who can do the most for him. From Dusty's standpoint, a friend is someone for whom you would not hesitate to risk your life. Flair's charade and Dusty's illusion came to a tragic end in The Omni when Ric was defending his NWA crown against Nikita Koloff in a cage match. When the match started to turn Flair's way, Ivan Koloff rushed into the ring to assist his nephew. Rhodes rushed from the dressing room to help

(Continued on page 49)

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WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

Every month, our reporters will compile wrestlers' most revealing quotes. Often catching the grapplers with their guards down, our reporters will work endlessly in obtaining interesting quotes on a variety of subjects.

DUSTY RHODES
"This here is one major conspiracy in the NWA that I'm not gonna take lightly. Pigface Ole Anderson and his cousin Arn done triple-teamed me along with Ric Flair and broke my ankle. Now, I expect that from the Andersons, but Flair has these delusions of class and usually thinks he's above this kind of attack. Let's see what he thinks six months from now when *his* ankle is broken!"

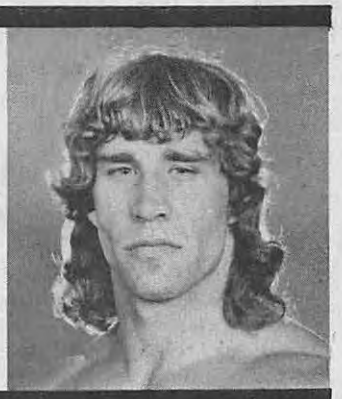
BOBBY HEENAN
"I've raised my bounty on Paul Orndorff from $20,000 to $50,000. It doesn't matter to me: $20,000, $50,000 or even $100,000. I have the money, that's no problem. The fact of the matter is that I was ready to dump Orndorff anyway. And now that the bounty on him is up to 50 grand, let's see if a few more mercenaries don't come running out of the woodwork!"

BOBBY JAGGERS
"I don't have to take this kind of crap. People are criticizing me from all sides. Look: I'm a tough wrestler, I've wrestled all around the country, and I don't really care what people think of me or my wrestling style or where I've been or where I'm going. I have some things to do here in the Pacific Northwest, and I'm gonna get 'em done. Ricky Vaughn, Steve Simpson, and Joe Savoldi: You're all number one on my hit list!"

JIM GARVIN
"Look, how many times do I have to explain this to you people? It's not *my* fault that I'm the best-looking wrestler in the sport. It's not *my* fault that I'm destined to be remembered as the greatest wrestler in AWA history. It's not *my* fault that I've got the best tag team partner in a man by the name of Steve Regal. Greatness? It drips off me like dandruff off the front row fans."

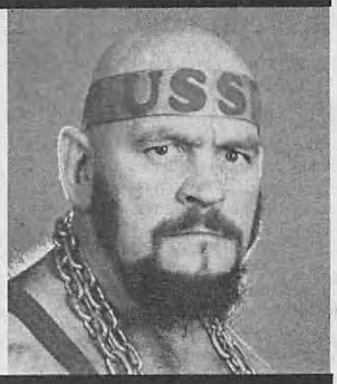
KERRY VON ERICH

"I hear that Ric Flair has a petition out to keep us Von Erichs from getting any title shots against him. He says that if we get any more title matches, we're going to get hurt. Well, I have news for Ric Flair—the reason he doesn't want to wrestle me or Kerry is that we have a better chance of beating him and taking his title than anyone else in the world. And that's a fact."



IVAN KOLOFF

"Russians are naturally superior to Americans. Look at American stupidity—no matter how many times we repeat that fact, dumb Americans refuse to believe it. We are physically superior; look at my nephew Nikita. We are mentally superior; I will match my strategic mind against anyone. And when us Russians take all the NWA World titles, wrestling world will *have* to believe this fact."

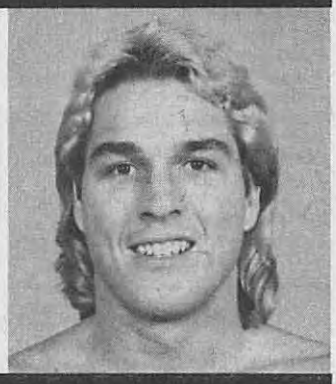


KEVIN SULLIVAN

"The black robe of Abughdadien was handed to me on a dark night of the new moon during which I bade farewell to the spirit of Visighmanthia. I placed the robe over my shoulders, bent my head, and gazed into the Pond of Knowingness. I saw my future, and the future of Maya Singh, and the future of Florida, and the future of wrestling. That future is now, the maker of the future is us."

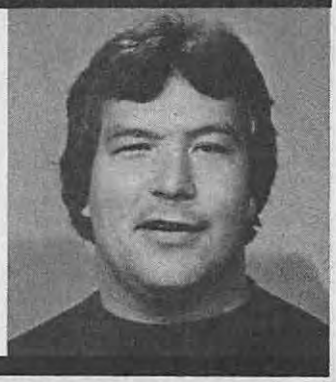
TERRY TAYLOR

"I worked long and I worked hard, and it all finally paid off. I came to the World Championship area with the goal of winning the National title. I went after Black Bart, I got the match, and I wrestled hard. In the end, though, I did win the title, and I intend to defend the belt with all the honor and sportsmanship that the fans deserve."



TED DiBIASE

"I have no idea what the hell is going on here in the Mid-South! I leave the country to go to Japan for a few weeks, and my title is taken out from under me. Jake Roberts is pandering to the fans. Bruiser Bob Sweetan has Steve Williams' timing destroyed. I'm going to have to start knocking some heads around to get things back into decent shape."



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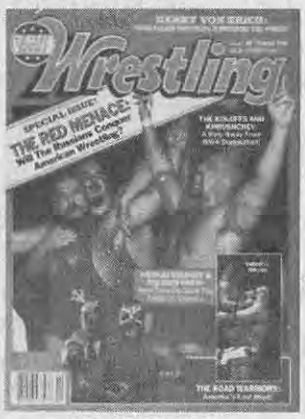

OCTOBER 1985

October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.
November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.
December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.
February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBiase, Race.
March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk.
April 1983/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.
May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.
June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.
July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.
August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.
September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.
October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.
November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.
December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.
January 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Rich, Superstar, Piper.
February 1984/Stories include: Abdullah, Sawyers, Valiant, Von Erich.
March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.
April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.
May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.
June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase.
July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.
August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler.
September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.
October 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Road Warriors, Steamboat, Piper.
November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.
December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A.
January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.
February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.
March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.
April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Albano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy.
May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.
June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.
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☐ NOV 74	☐ FEB 78	☐ JULY 80	☐ NOV 82	☐ SEPT 84
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☐ AUG 75	☐ AUG 78	☐ SEPT 80	☐ FEB 83	☐ NOV 84
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☐ APR 76	☐ JAN 79	☐ APR 81	☐ JUNE 83	☐ MAR 85
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December 1976/Stories include: Von Erich, Mulligan, Brody, Funk.

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AUGUST 1985

May 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Brody, Valiants, Race.

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April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

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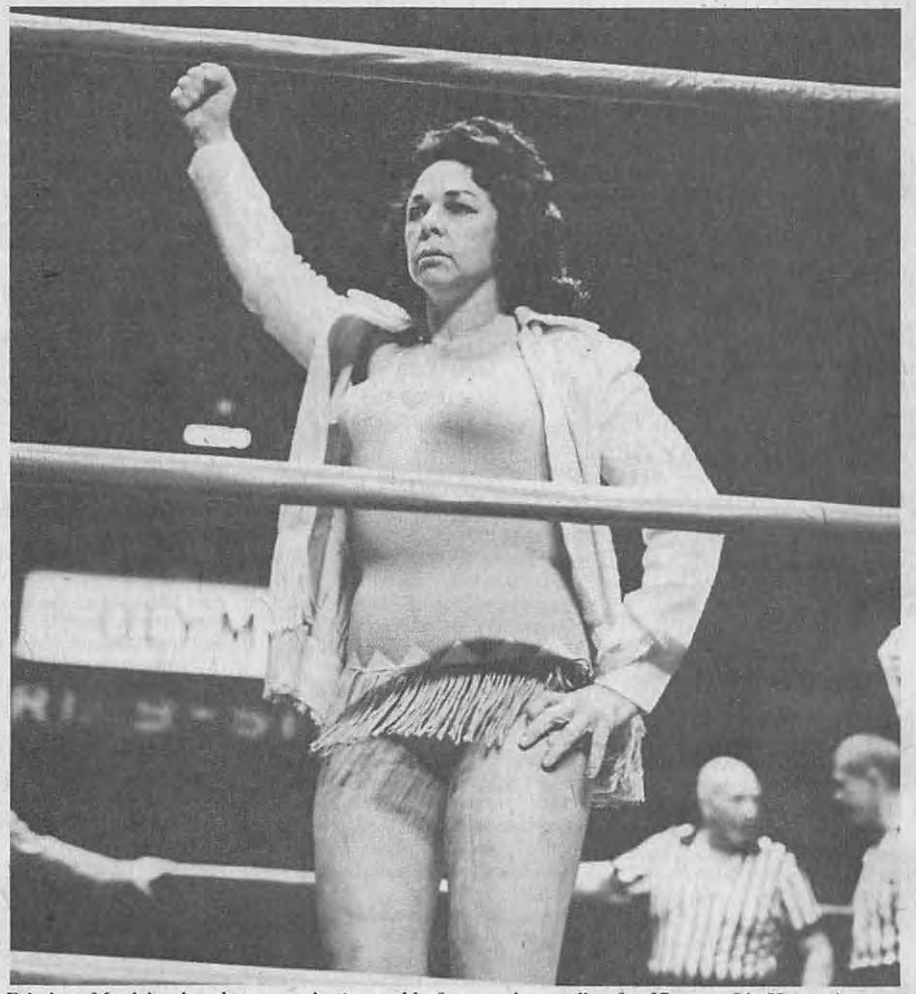
ON ASSIGNMENT

BY LIZ HUNTER

STAY AWAY FROM me this month. I'm on a rampage. This job is frustrating me to no end.

Generally, I use this column as a sounding board for my views about professional wrestling. This means I take advantage of my allotted space to blather on about what goes on the *ring*. But for the second time in three months, I feel compelled to criticize my colleagues at *PWI!*

First it was Peter King, with his nonsensical editorial in last November's *Inside Wrestling* belittling female referees. I pointed out the sexist fallacies of his argument in my December *PWI* column. Now I've seen the January issue of *The Wrestler*, and I'm furious. That magazine is our special 20th Anniversary issue, and contains Top 10 Wrestlers rankings that both our readers and staff have put together. I'm not upset about not being asked to make my own list—after all, I spent a couple of weeks with a hunky blue-eyed beau in Aruba, and I missed a few editorial meetings. What bothers me is that only 847 of our readers chose the greatest champion of the past 20 years. And worse, only one member of *The Wrestler* staff selected this champion, an individual who defeated virtually all comers for *more than* 20 years. Who, in fact, was the only champion to enjoy the incredible honor of having their face printed on the championship belt to symbolize their domination of the title?



Fabulous Moolah reigned supreme in the world of women's wrestling for 27 years. Liz Hunter is very angry that Moolah was only listed by one of the editors on their lists of the top 10 wrestlers of the last 20 years.

There is only one answer. The Fabulous Moolah, the greatest female wrestler in history. Arguably the greatest female athlete in the history of sports.

I find it disgusting that the fans voted in a hyped-up mediocrity like Hulk Hogan ahead of the woman who ruled her sport for more than 27 years. But the fans' vote is, at least, understandable; like any popular ballot, it reflects a measure of fame as much as ability. The Fabulous Moolah has never received a fraction of the press coverage she's deserved; along with every other female wrestler, she wasn't even allowed to compete in New York State until 1971!

However, I find my colleagues' malfeasance inexcusable. They are supposed to be the finest wrestling analysts in the field. They have the United States' larg-

(Continued on page 52)

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BY EDDIE ELLNER

off the Top Rope

If you wish to contribute to Ellner's mailbag, send your letters to:

TOP ROPE, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571

[Editor's Note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Eddie Ellner himself. They do not necessarily represent the editorial views of this magazine.]

I RECEIVED A letter from Tony DeVries. It said "Dear Mr. Ellner. You're a real scumbucket." I paused, thinking that finally someone has figured me out for what I am. The letter continued; "The only reason I say this is because I feel it is an appropriate way to welcome you to the column." Who am I to argue with such logic? On to this month's correspondence:

Dear Mr. Ellner,

Congratulations! I wish you great and continued success with your column and am happy that the voice of Dan Shocket will live on. I'd appreciate the honor of asking you the first question, and it's one you might expect: I would like to know exactly what your opinion of the Von Erichs is? I think they are the most overrated threesome in wrestling.

RICKY HIDALGO
Milwaukee

Dear Mr. Hidalgo,

It seems the fashion these days to criticize the Von Erichs, and while I'm certainly no fan of theirs, I think it's time to clear up some misconceptions. Lumped together, the Von Erichs constitute a tremendous accumulation of wrestling talent. Kevin is clearly among the top wrestlers in the world. David was a fine talent, as is Kerry. Mike has the tools to be a very good wrestler. They constitute a group of solid and dependable wrestlers, always hustling, although none of them, with the exception of Kevin, could ever be accused of being superstars. Therein lies the problem. The Von Erichs have been portrayed by the press as being something akin to the Originators of All Living Things. While such plaudits make for smooth and easy copy, the truth gets whitewashed. The Von Erichs *aren't the greatest wrestlers in the world*, and to attribute to them qualities of such Herculean magnitude is sensationalist journalism at its worst. It annihilates the entire concept of criticism. I consider Brian Adidas and Kerry Von Erich to be cut from generally the same cloth of talent, yet no one expects Adidas to part the Gulf of Mexico. If, Mr. Hidalgo, the Von Erichs are overrated, the fault lies with the national press and with their hysterical cult of fans, not with the family itself.

From left to right: The great, the good, and the okay. Now if only their legions of fans would open their eyes and accept that simple truth. The Von Erichs are not God's gifts to the New World.

(Continued on page 54)

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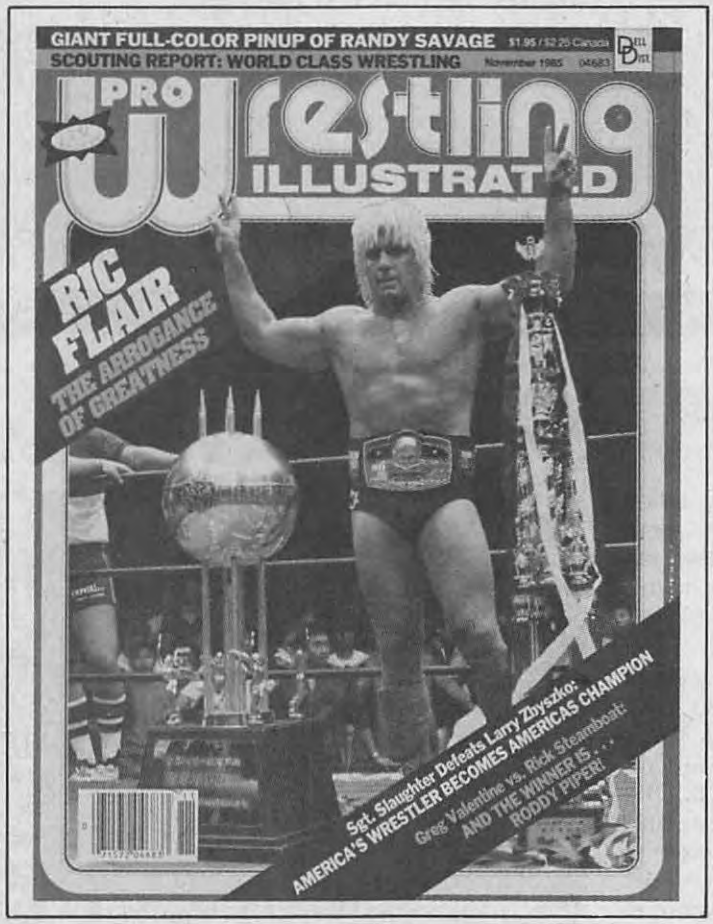
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IN FOCUS

With CRAIG PETERS

THE *PWI* T-SHIRT PHOTO CONTEST

Go figure it. Last month I noted how it was remarkable that there haven't been many WWF-based fan photos in this contest, and this month marks the second in a row for a WWF-based winner.

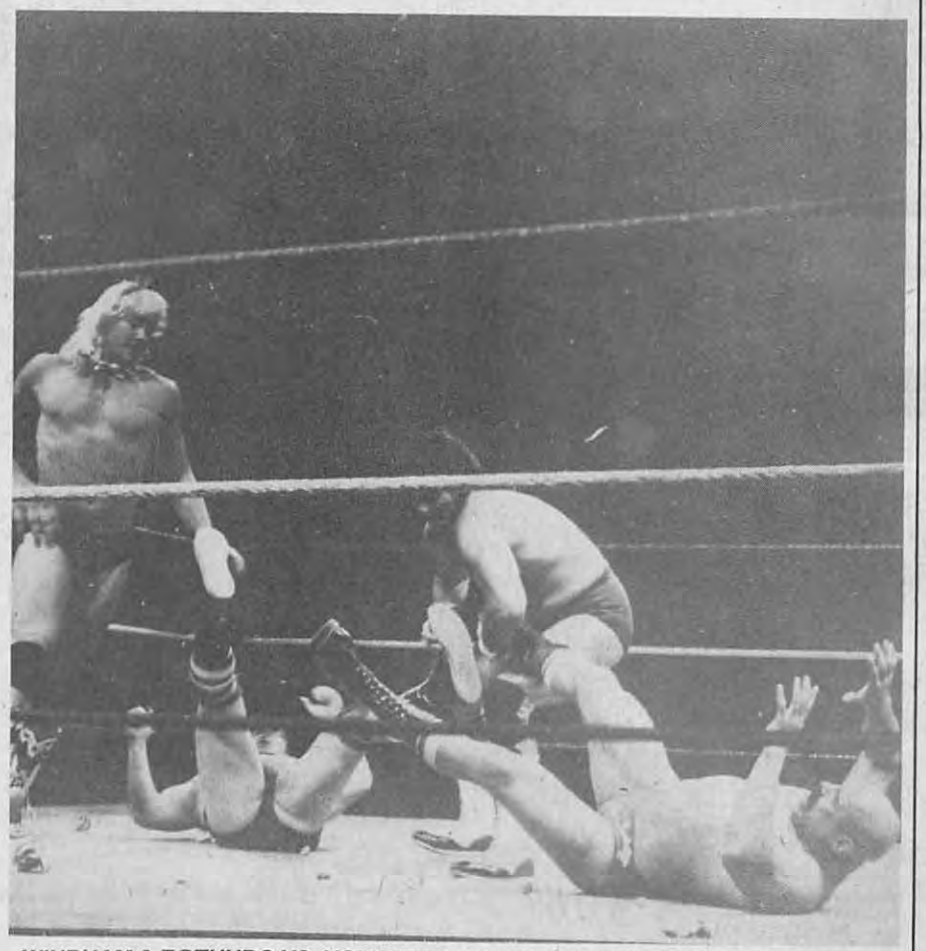
This issue we salute Deborah Cloughen of Syosset, New York, who submitted this photo of a Texas Tornado match at the Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, New York. The print quality of the photo was a little below par, but Deborah's photo is notable for the fact that she managed to capture a peak moment of action when all four men were clearly visible to her camera's eye.

You can see Barry Windham and Mike Rotundo moving in for a pair of figure-four leglocks on Nikolai Volkoff and The Iron Sheik, respectively. "Barry and Mike were the winners," reads Deborah's note, "but Fred Blassie came in after the match and used his cane on Barry."

For her photo you see here, Deborah wins a *PWI* T-shirt.

You are invited to send in wrestling photos you have taken. Each month, "In Focus" will print the best fan photo of the month, and award that person a *PWI* T-shirt. All photos must be black and white. They become the property of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* and cannot be returned.

A short description of the match along with the name of the arena and the final result of the match would be appreciated with your photo. Send your photo to: In Focus c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* Box 48, Rockville Centre, New York, 11571. And don't forget to include your T-shirt size (small, medium, large, extra large).



WINDHAM & ROTUNDO VS. VOLKOFF & IRON SHEIK, BY DEBORAH CLOUGHEN

WHERE TO WRITE TO YOUR FAVORITES

I don't think I can count the number of letters that cross my desk each week that say something along these lines:

Dear Craig: Please, please, please forward this letter to [insert wrestler's name here]. I don't have an address on him, and I really want to get in touch. Please!

It is a very rare instance when I can forward a letter to a wrestler. Usually I'll tell a fan to write to his or her favorte wrestler in care of a local arena. But now, for the first time ever in *PWI,* I'm able to provide you with a good list of where to send a letter to your favorite wrestler (making sure you write the wrestler's name *clearly* above the address on the envelope). Save this list for future reference!

RICK MORTON & ROBERT GIBSON: LOOKING FOR MAIL

NWA stars, including Ric Flair, Dusty Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Nikita Koloff, The Rock 'n' Roll Express, Tully Blanchard, Terry Taylor, Manny Fernandez, and Jimmy Valiant, usually appear weekly on *World Championship Wrestling* on WTBS. Write to them in care of: World Championship Wrestling; 1250 South Omni International; Atlanta, Georgia; 30303.

AWA fans can reach Rick Martel, Sgt. Slaughter, Larry Zbyszko, Nick Bockwinkel, Baron Von Raschke, Greg Gagne, and others by writing to them in care of: AWA; 10001 Wayzata Blvd.; Minneapolis, Minnesota; 55343.

WWF wrestlers like Hulk Hogan, Junkyard Dog, Tito Santana, Rick Steamboat, Paul Orndorff, and Roddy Piper can be reached in care of: WWF; 81 Holly Hill Lane; Greenwich, Connecticut; 06830.

World Class stars such as the Von Erichs, Brian Adidas, Iceman Parsons, Chris Adams, Gino Hernandez, and Sunshine may be contacted in care of: World Class Championship Wrestling; Dallas Sportatorium; 1000 S. Industrial Blvd.; Dallas, Texas; 75207.

Mid-South wrestlers, including Hacksaw Duggan, Jake Roberts, Ted DiBiase, Steve Williams, Dick Murdoch, and Bill Watts, receive mail at: Mid-South Sports Inc.; 116 West Breckenridge; Bixby, Oklahoma; 74008.

Florida area stars such as Billy Jack Haynes, Rick Rude, Wahoo McDaniel, Bugsy McGraw, Mike Graham, and Kendell Windham can be reached in care of: Championship Wrestling From Florida; Tampa Sportatorium; 106 North Albany; Tampa, Florida; 33606.

IF YOU HAVEN'T VOTED YET . . .

I want to remind you that if you haven't sent in your choices for the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Achievement '85 vote, you still have a little time before the December 1 deadline.

We need your selections in nine categories: Wrestler of the Year, Most Popular Wrestler of the Year, Most Hated Wrestler of the Year, Manager of the Year, Match of the Year, Tag Team of the Year, Rookie of the Year, Most Improved Wrestler of the Year, and Inspirational Wrestler of the Year.

We also want you to be creative this year and come up with your own award, the "Unofficial Official Award." For example, you could pick a Referee of the Year, a Most Obnoxious Wrestler of the Year, a Worst Wrestling Announcer award, a Worst Match of the Year, or even a Most Ridiculous Merchandising Ploy of the Year. Don't be afraid to be witty, creative, and even outrageous if need be. A special page of "Unofficial Official Awards" will appear in the giant year-end issue of *PWI.*

The address for you to mail in your choices for Achievement '85 winners is: Achievement '85 c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated;* Box 48; Rockville Centre, New York 11570. And don't forget your "Unofficial Official Award" as well!

That year-end issue (which is cover dated "March 1986"), comes to your newsstand less than a month from now. It's going to be a special double-issue jam-packed with extra pages and features, including eight pages in full-color. Don't miss it—at 92 pages thick, it's our biggest issue ever, and it's sure to be a sell-out. The year-end double-issue of *PWI* goes on sale December 24! □

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

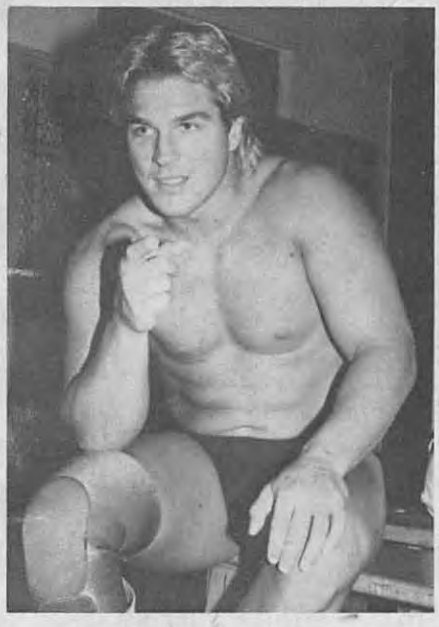
PRESS CONFERENCE TERRY TAYLOR

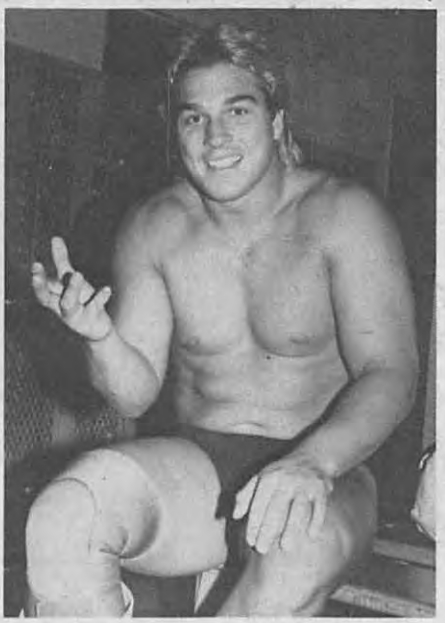
FOR THOSE OF you who think that Terry Taylor would rather spend the day clothes shopping at Bloomingdale's than sweating out a training session consider these facts: After losing his North American title to The Nightmare, and after being denied a title shot against Ric Flair, Taylor could have retreated into a series of easy paydays against preliminary wrestlers, allowing his popularity to take him to places where his grappling skills couldn't. Instead of boosting his won-lost record against easy opposition, Taylor, with timely support from Magnum T.A., went into the gym and re-doubled his training efforts. Taking on such dangerous opponents such as Kamala, Konga the Barbarian, and Phil Hickerson, Taylor demonstrated to the wrestling world that he was made of a tenacity and determination not easily deterred.

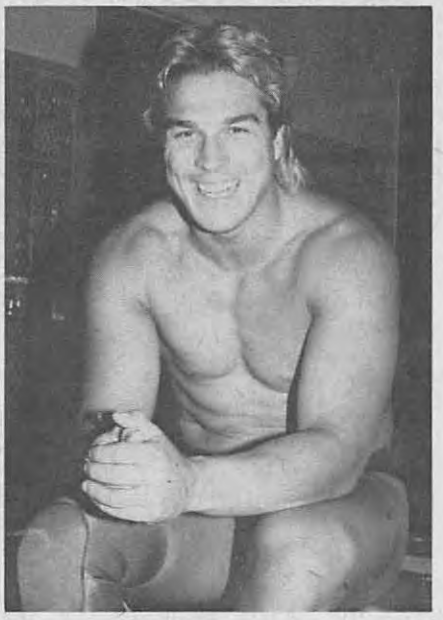
And, to no one's surprise, Taylor's persistence paid off as he recently defeated Black Bart to capture the National title, thereby putting himself again in line for a shot at the NWA crown.

Terry Taylor slams Black Bart's head into a ringside table during one of Bart's many rematches for the National title. Taylor is a superb scientific wrestler, but he is also able to brawl with the best of them if need be.

Although his handsome features and snappy style of dress make him a natural fan idol, Taylor is modest to a fault and prefers to dwell on his wrestling career and title aspirations. Senior Editor Bill Apter was joined by Managing Editor Stu Saks and Assistant Editor Eddie Ellner in this press conference.







"I figure I have a big advantage over anyone who considers me nothing more than a pretty boy. They're not expecting to find me capable of wrestling."

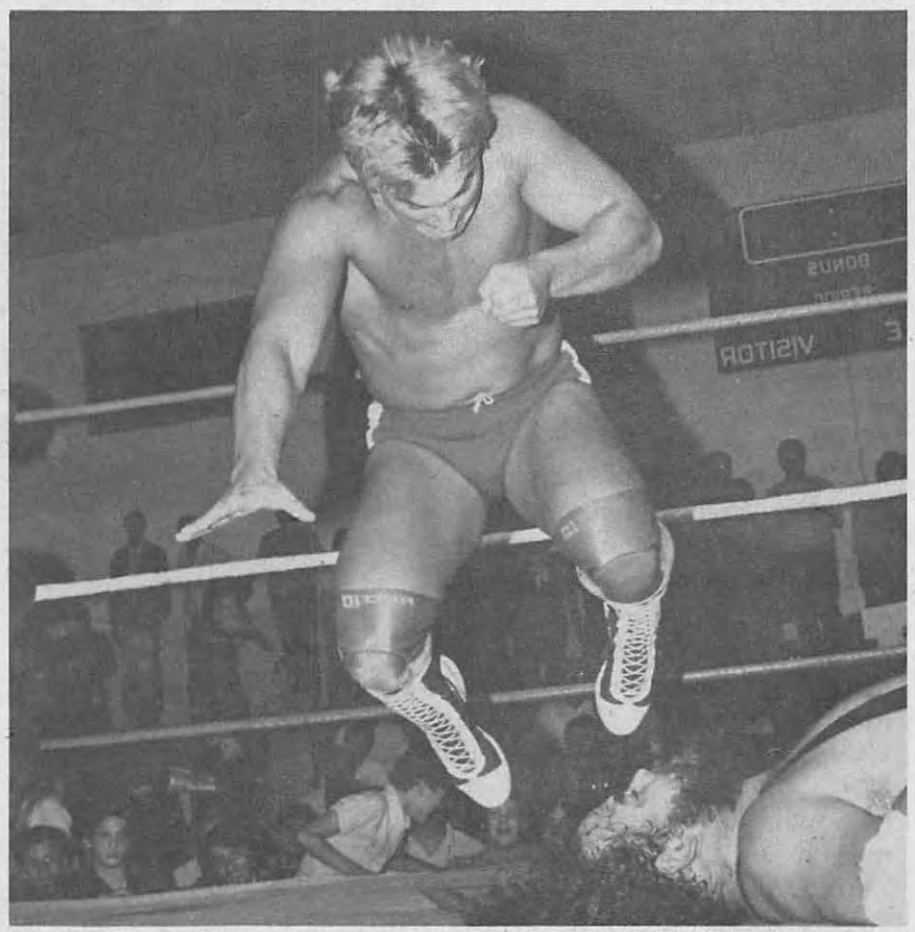
STU SAKS: Does it bother you that Magnum T.A.—your good friend Magnum T.A.—is getting all these title shots at Flair? Do you see this title as possibly becoming a wedge in your friendship?

TERRY TAYLOR: **I know what you're thinking. Wrestling is notoriously a dog-eat-dog sport. Every day it seems as if good friends turn on each other for personal gain. Let me say here and now and to the thousands of fans who read this magazine that there is no way that the pursuit of the NWA title will interfere with my relationship with Magnum. Nothing could break up our friendship.**

BILL APTER: Terry, why don't you tell us how Magnum helped you pick up the pieces after you lost your title to The Nightmare. Or should I say had your title *stolen* from you by The Nightmare.

EDDIE ELLNER: I don't think you should say "stolen," Bill. In fact there's very little I think you should say.

SAKS: Why is this happening? Why can't we ever conduct a nice simple interview without Ellner wising off



The concentration on Taylor's face is apparent as he delivers a fist to Bart's forehead. Taylor says he is willing to take on all challengers to the National title, and he wants to restore honor to the title that it didn't have during Bart's reign.

like this. We're sorry, Terry. If you would just answer Bill's question.

TAYLOR: I'd love to, Stu. After I lost to The Nightmare, I was down—perhaps not as down as many people supposed—but I must admit that I was deeply depressed. Magnum wouldn't let me rest easy for a single second. He had me in the gym every day, and when he we had a scheduling conflict he'd always call. Now I'm a professional and I certainly don't need a nursemaid to hold my hand, but I definitely needed some support. Magnum was there for me and I'll never forget it.

APTER: When Magnum was down recently, he took a match against Abdullah. Wasn't it Magnum who encouraged you to wrestle Kamala when you were down?

TAYLOR: It sure was. I'm tempted to say, "what are friends for" since I left that match about as bruised as I've ever been. The fact is that my match with Kamala was the best medicine for me. I needed a match to completely shake my foundations. By handling a maniac like Kamala I knew that I was ready for anything.

ELLNER: What if the promoters offered you an open contract against Flair with the provision that you would have to wrestle Magnum first?

TAYLOR: Like I said, I am a professional. I wouldn't hesitate to wrestle Magnum, and I've got news for all you guys—that would be one helluva

Taylor ensnares Bart in a headlock (above) and delivers a knee to his forehead (below). Terry has wrestled aggressively since winning the National title. Few wrestlers who have faced him have enjoyed much of an advantage at any time in the match.

match. I feel we're very evenly matched. But, of course, in the end I would win (smiles).

SAKS: Did you change your strategy against Black Bart to compensate for the difference in your weights?

TAYLOR: That's where wrestling Kamala sure came in handy. It's true that Bart has me by almost 80 pounds, but I've always wrestled stronger than my weight. That, and the fact that Bart doesn't really carry his bulk well, I feel made the difference in our weights a negligible factor. I was very confident going into that match. I knew I was going to win.

SAKS: Does this title mean more to you than the North American belt?

TAYLOR: I don't think there's anything more thrilling than winning your first major title, although this win comes mighty close. I appreciate this victory more because I know how hard I worked for it. And it'll take more than a sneak-attack to get this belt away from me.

ELLNER: What's your reaction when somebody claims you're nothing but a pretty boy with no wrestling talent whatsoever?

TAYLOR: I let them take a long hard look at my belt before I invite them into the ring to wrestle. I figure I have a big advantage over anyone who considers me nothing more than a pretty boy. They're not expecting to find me capable of wrestling. I think they'll be in for a big surprise.

APTER: Have you ever considered teaming with Magnum? You two are so compatable out of the ring, perhaps together as a tag team you could make some noise.

TAYLOR: Magnum and I have tossed around that possibility many times, and in each conversation we reach the same conclusion: We both want to pursue our singles careers a bit fur-

(Continued on page 51)

NEXT TIME GINO CHEATS
DON'T JUST SIT THERE
RAM HIS HEAD INTO THE TURNBUCKLE

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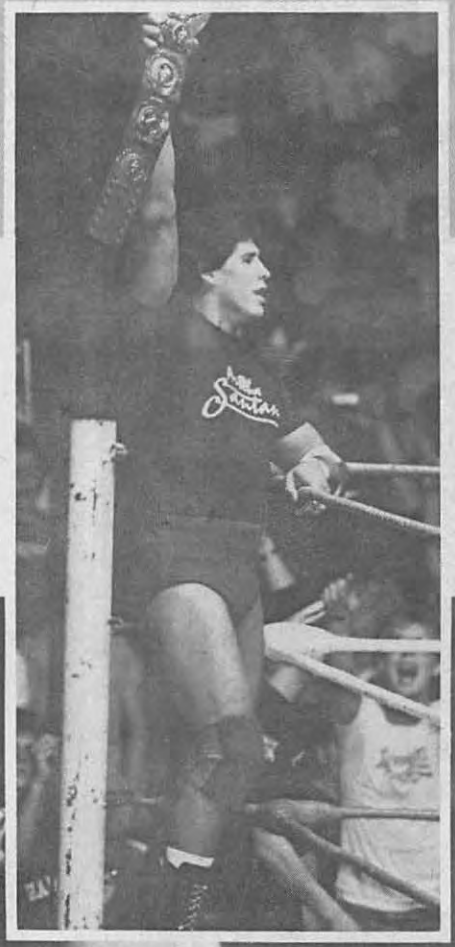
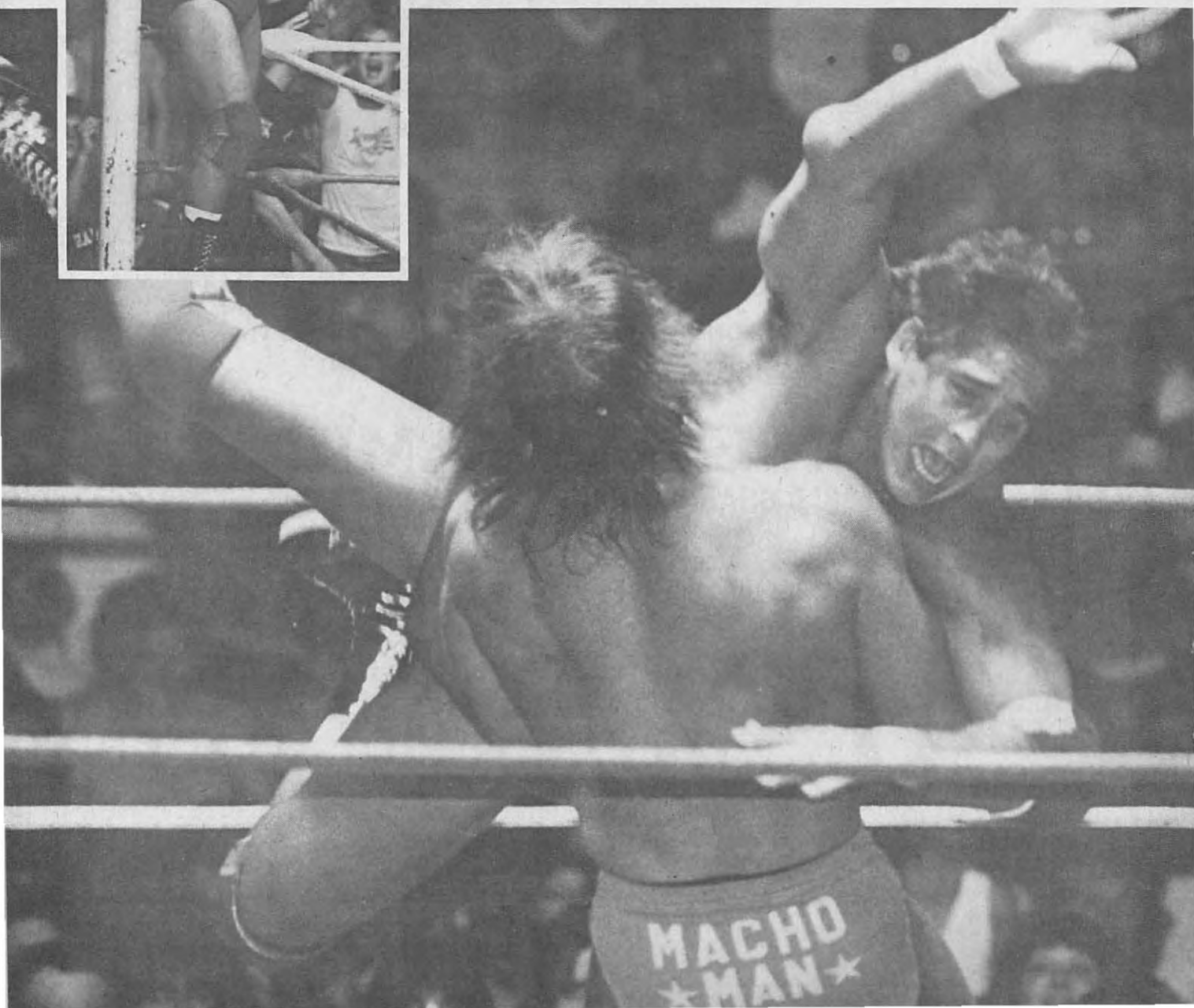
TITO SANTANA

THE WWF'S *FIGHTING* CHAMPION!



The scientific firebrand from Tocula, Mexico, has labored in Hulk Hogan's shadow for the past two years. This may not turn out to be a permanent arrangement for the WWF's most honorable titleholder



Photos by David Fitzgerald

IT WAS SEPTEMBER 23, 1985, and a packed crowd at Madison Square Garden eagerly awaited the entrance of Howard Finkel.

Readers who have never seen a live card at the Garden may well wonder why. Ring announcer Finkel is one of the most recognizable faces in the WWF, but that doesn't explain why he was greeted with cheers before the final match. The fans knew, however, that Finkel's appearance before the last match on any Garden card signals the announcement of next month's lineup at the arena.

The slim, unflappable announcer climbed between the ropes and gestured for the ring mike. It descended like a periscope, and Finkel reached for it automatically with his left hand while gazing at the notes he held before him in his right hand. Quietly clearing his throat, he began the roll call of matches for the next show.

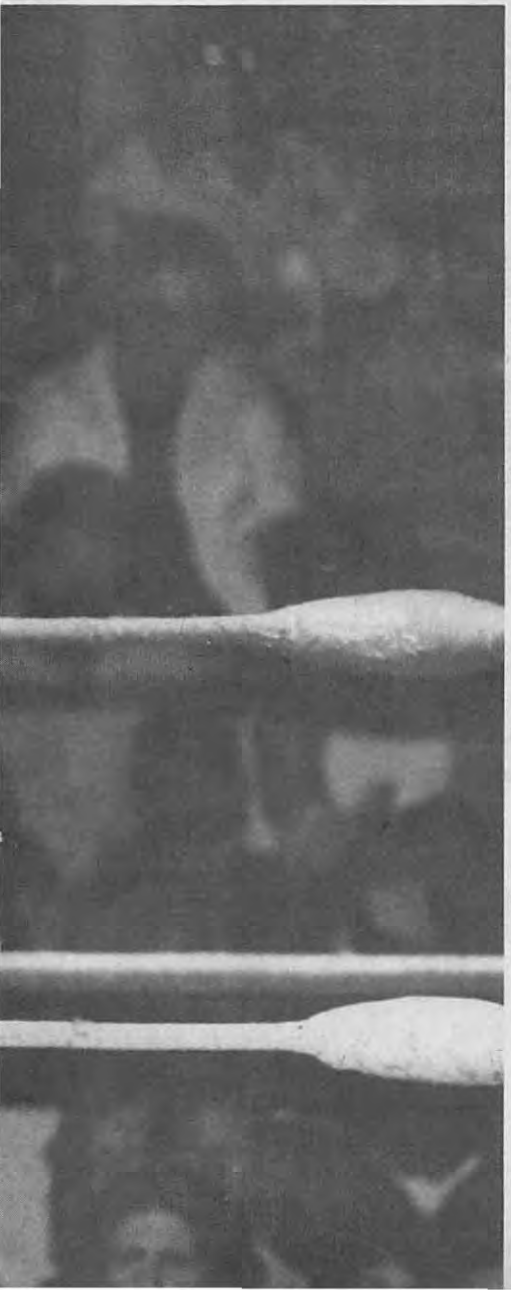
When he was finished, there was little immediate reaction. Gradually, a wave of unhappy murmuring flowed through nearly every row and section in the massive edifice. Oh, the next card wasn't bad; it promised plenty of action. But there was a terrible void in the lineup. The most popular wrestler in the WWF, the man whose name has become synonymous with professional wrestling to the world at large, wouldn't be there. Again.

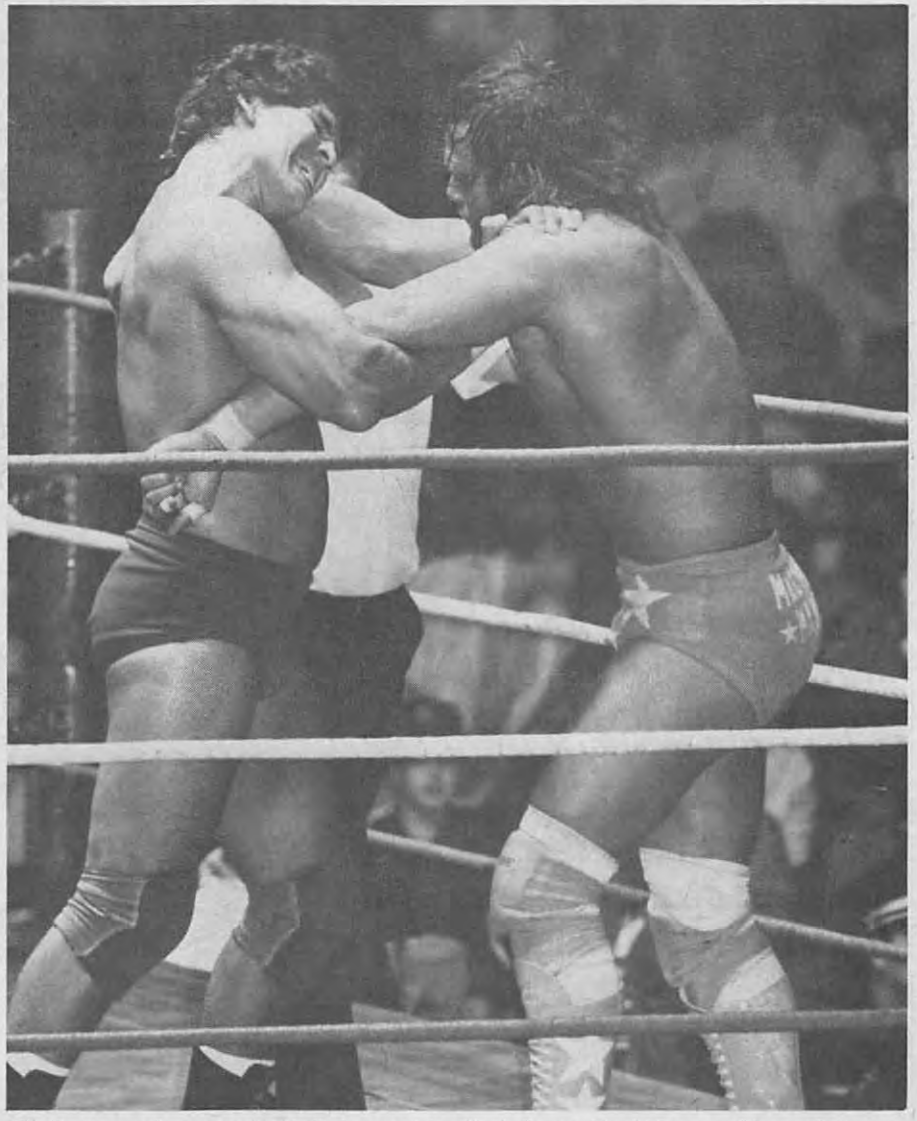
No Hulk Hogan at the Garden in October. Hulkamania wouldn't run wild, for the third month in a row.

Tragically, this scenario was nothing new to the fans at the Garden. Hogan's reign is rapidly approaching its second anniversary, and it has been distinguished from the start by a schedule of title defenses that has been erratic, to put it mildly. Only a few months after Hogan won the title, he was being roundly criticized for the infrequency of his ring appearances. A stinging "We Accuse" editorial in the July 1984 issue of our sister publication *Sports Review Wrestling* took him to task for skipping the Garden cards in March and April of that year.

It is not known whether such criticism spurred him on to defend

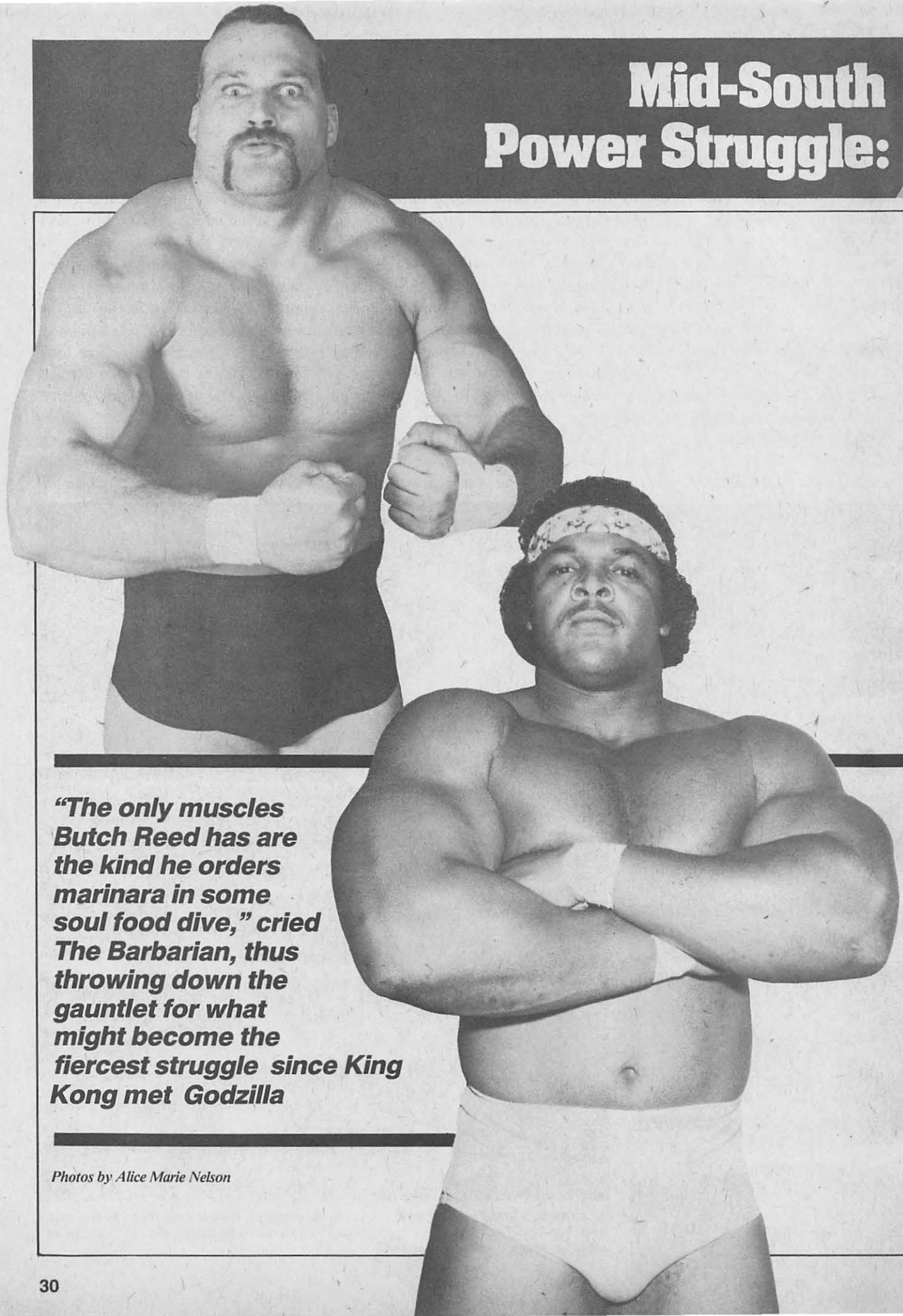
(Continued on page 56)





Tito Santana, a former pro football player, catches his challenger, Randy Savage, with a perfect crossbodyblock (left). Tito, who knows from experience how much of a handicap a weakened limb can be, works on Savage's left arm (above).

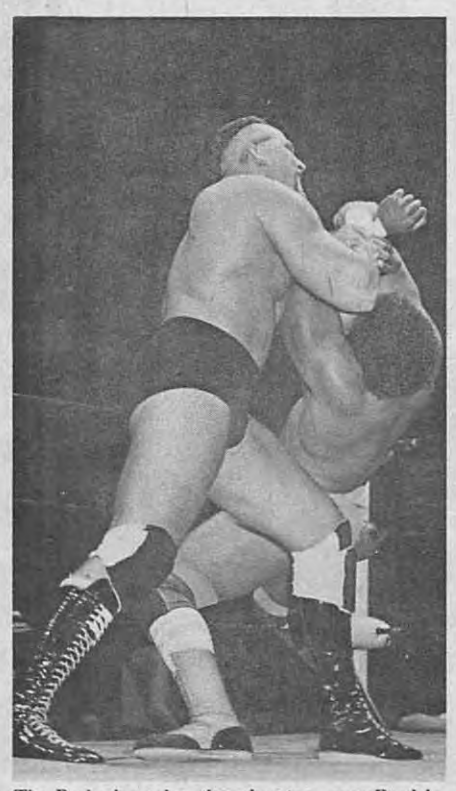
Mid-South Power Struggle:



"The only muscles Butch Reed has are the kind he orders marinara in some soul food dive," cried The Barbarian, thus throwing down the gauntlet for what might become the fiercest struggle since King Kong met Godzilla

Photos by Alice Marie Nelson

IS THE BARBARIAN STRONGER THAN BUTCH REED?



The Barbarian takes the advantage over Reed in test of strength.

Reed vainly tries to power his way out of The Barbarian's headlock.

The Barbarian takes the advantage over Reed in a test of strength.

BUTCH REED'S EYES were squeezed shut, a mask of concentration. Rivulets of sweat slithered down his face. His hands gripped the bar like a vise. Surrounding him was a cluster of gym hogs in assorted states of grimace. They shot out blips of encouragement. "Push it Butch, baby." "Spring it Ace, spring it!" "It's all you, man, you can do it."

The 30-pound bar creaked at the 480 pounds it was asked to hold. Reed's grip tightened. His body heaved once from the bench as he drew a deep breath. He heaved twice, then a third time. "C'mon Ace, it's all you, it's all you," screamed a man from the back. On the fourth heave, Reed's eyes popped open, his body quaking as he maneuvered the bar off the rack and lifted it. The crowd, exclusively men, most of them weighing between 250 and 300 grizzly pounds, were awed into silence. Reed pushed the weight off his chest six more times, his flesh now nothing but skin wrapped tightly around stone. His fellow weightlifters, themselves vain in the way proud men are about their own strength, broke into natural cheers as Reed bounded off the bench.

Later on in the locker room, as Reed was receiving a massage, he trained his comments on the new kid on his block and contender for the title as strongest wrestler in the Mid-South, The Barbarian.

"The Barbarian, lemme tell you about The Barbarian," Reed started, as his massive deltoids were kneaded into place by the masseuse. "He thinks he owns the territory. He's nothing but a stubborn teenager. He has all the answers. He's the final authority on everything. He's a crazy boy."

Reed swung his body off the training table and rose to his full 6'2" and 265 pounds. With only a small towel about his waist, Reed's approach is that of a statue calmly stepping off of it's pedestal, a slab of chiseled granite suddenly voicing an opinion. "I been in this game for a long time," went his oration, "I've worked like a dog to get to where I am and I'll be damned if I'm gonna let some fly-by-night flunky usurp my position.

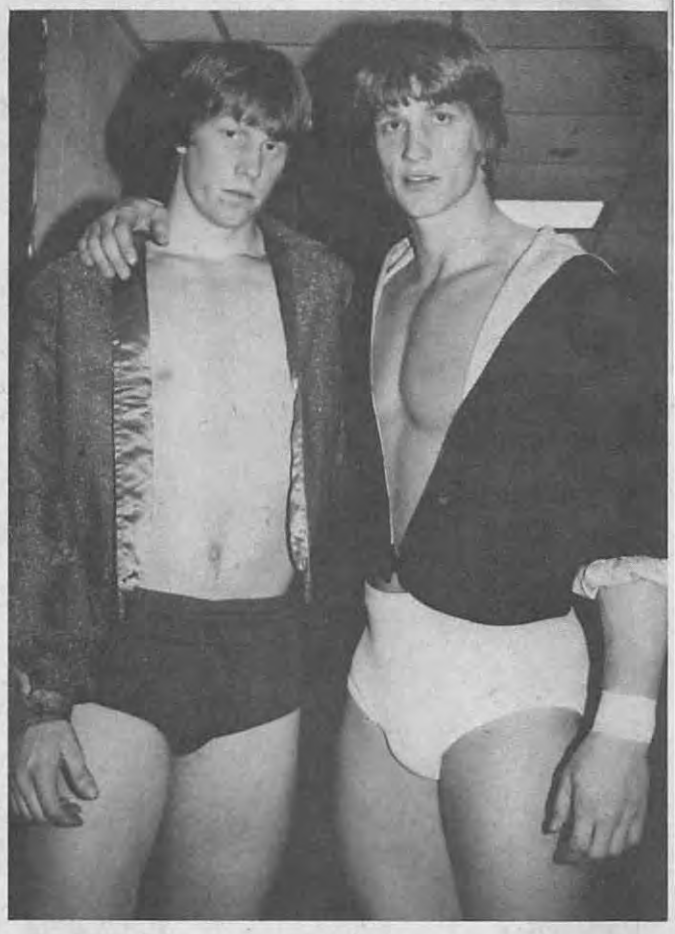
"You saw what happened out

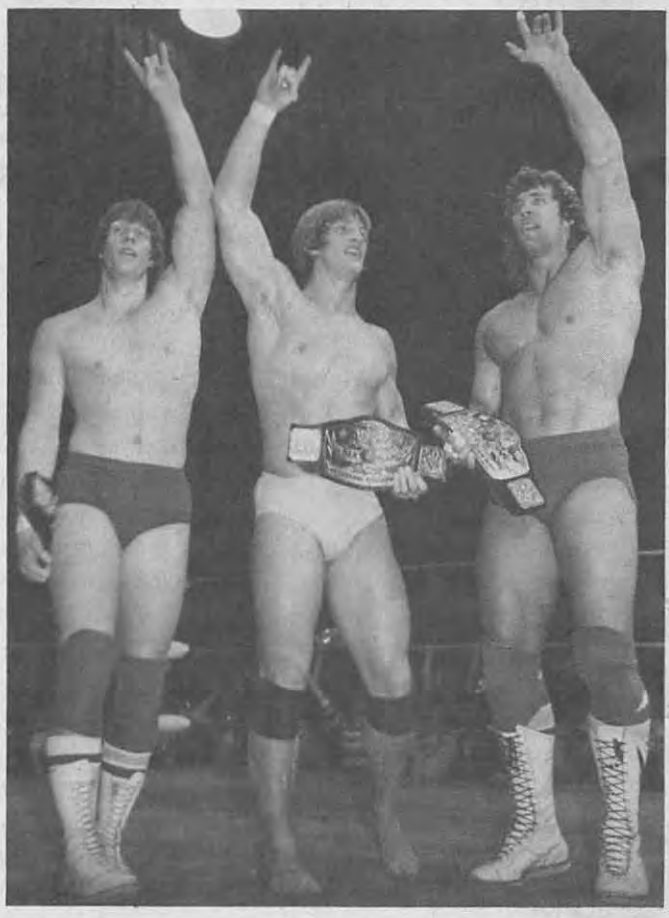
(Continued on page 58)

Photos by Buddy Myers

Mike Von Erich's Brush With Death:

"TRAGEDY HAS MADE MY FAMILY STRONGER"





By Kevin Von Erich

[Editor's Note: As the oldest brother in the wrestling Von Erich family, Kevin Von Erich has guided his family through a myriad of personal and professional tragedies with quiet and calming strength. The initial tragedy to paint Kevin's life, the electrocution of his older brother Jack when Kevin was only three years old, allowed Kevin to develop early on his attitude toward death and, more important, toward life.

It was up to Kevin recently to help his family through another near tragedy, which occurred when his 20-year-old brother, Mike, was stricken with toxic shock syndrome following surgery on his left shoulder. Mike's temperature rose to a life-threatening 107 degrees and he lost consciousness. Placed in intensive care at Baylor University Medical Center, he suffered from an inflamed pancreas, and was experiencing lung dysfunction. He was placed on a respirator to help him breathe. His kidney function was severely impared, and he was placed on hemodialysis. Doctors prepared the family for the worst. Only Mike's strict conditioning and the unwavering faith of his family brought him through the crisis.

Against the backdrop of his brother's illness, and barely out from the shadows of his brother David's death, Kevin Von Erich describes how his family has become stronger through times of great despair.]

WRESTLING'S FIRST FAMILY: Mike and Kevin pose in the dressing room (opposite top). Mike, Kevin, and Kerry salute their fans (opposite bottom). Mike, papa Fritz, and Kevin—winners of the World Class six-man title last May (above). Mike soothes his wounded brother Kevin (top right). Kevin, David, and Kerry stand behind Chris and Mike in 1968 (right).

AT HOME, Mike had started shaking with fever and talking unintelligibly. His fever was hovering around 105 degress. When we got him to the hospital, his fever was up to 107. The receiving physician took one look at him and said that this boy is dying. We threw him in a helicopter and rushed to Baylor University Medical Center, where they had the facilities to better handle Mike's condition.

It got to the point where Kerry and I practically cornered the doctor in the stairwell and forced him to tell us what was going on. Ever since we had rushed Mike to the hospital, our family had been kept in the dark. Later on, the doctors told us that they didn't want to upset our mother. Finally, Kerry and I demanded to know his condition. I remember saying that our little brother was dying and I wanted to know when. Tonight? Tomorrow? It was that bad.

The doctor said that Mike had fought as hard as he could. All his organs had failed and that even if by some miracle he should survive, he'd suffer permanent brain damage. It looked very bleak.

On record, five athletes had contracted toxic shock syndrome during surgery—Mike was infected following surgery on his shoulder—and all five had died within 10 hours. Mike battled, scratched, and clawed for four days and he survived. According to the latest test results, he'll suffer absolutely no brain damage and, God willing, he'll be back wrestling before long. Mike's doctor, William Sutker, is now being asked to speak around the country about Mike's remarkable—and unprecedented—recovery.

It's strange what we remember. I recall Jack, my older brother, who died when I was three. [Jack, who was five, died accidently when he was electrocuted.] He was a monitor on our school bus. I thought he was Hercules, the way he bossed people around. Then, all of a sudden, he was gone. I guess my parents explained things to me the right way, because I never questioned them. Of course, all little boys go to heaven so I know I'll see Jack again.

Because I was so young, I don't know if I can say that Jack's death prepared me for David's death. In conversation, people always want to steer clear of David, as if the mention of his name would get me all depressed. Nothing could be further from the truth. David lived a wonderful, spirited life. In our family, David will always be here with us. We carry him into the ring with us during our every match.

How have the Von Erichs survived the seemingly senseless assault? I'm not one to stand on a soapbox and condemn people to hell if they don't follow

In good times and bad, the Von Erichs are a source of strength for one another. After Kevin's May 5, 1985, NWA title match with Ric Flair at Texas Stadium ended in disappointment, brothers Kerry and Mike were right there for him. Mrs. Von Erich trails her sons back to the dressing room.

my philosophy of life, but I do know what has worked for me. There are basic values, outlined in the Bible, that I've always subscribed to. I'm no religious zealot, I'm not a preacher—if pressed I would have to consider myself non-denominational—yet I know that the Holy Spirit resides in each and every one of us, offering us strength when we need it.

The way to have a happy and peaceful life is to follow your conscience—the Holy Spirit—which is really inside you. I read my Bible and interpret it in my own way. There are so many different variations of the Bible that people get confused. I'm against organized religion. You don't need a priest to confess to and save your soul. The only thing consistent is the Bible. It's allowed me to live my life fully and cope with whatever obstacles come in my way.

I believe that this life is not a permanent, immobile state of affairs. We're constantly stepping off elevators onto different floors. When I say that David lives within me and that one day I'll see Jack again, I mean it.

Mike proudly poses with his World Class six-man tag team belt before his illness. Where once there was little hope of his survival, now there is talk about a comeback.

I think a lot of my family's popularity is rooted in the fact that the Von Erichs embody that which is really good about this country. We don't cheat. We wrestle by the rules, but if we're wronged we won't hesitate to fight fire with fire. We stand up for our rights, but we won't hesitate to help someone out who's in trouble.

Families built America and families will restore America. Our family is just like our country. We have our ups and downs, our tragedies and triumphs, and we survive because we know in the end, after we count up our losses, we will always have each other. My family is my greatest asset and it always shall be. □

MIKE VON ERICH'S MESSAGE TO HIS FANS:

If it weren't for the support of my fans and friends and family, I don't think I would be here with you right now. When I was in the hospital, I remember my parents coming into my room and telling me that all their friends, the church elders, and thousands of fans were praying for me all the time. The odds change when you know that you're not fighting alone. I've received letters from Japan, Israel, Australia, and from every state in the country. The support in Texas has just been phenomenal. The TV stations had up-to-the-minute reports of my condition and I understand they were flooded with calls.

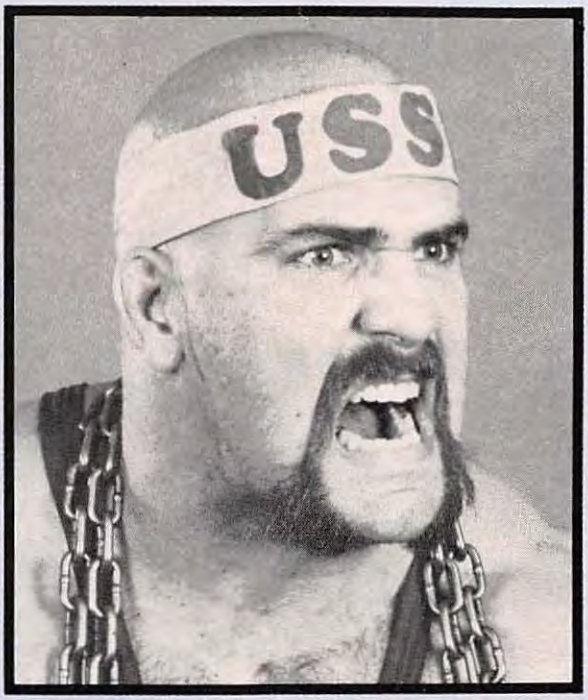
Knowing that that many people were concerned is an incredible feeling. It makes me want to get back into the ring all the more, which I plan on doing. My shoulder is still injured and I'll be in rehabilitation for a while longer. The biggest problem is my weight. I dropped almost 80 pounds in the course of my illness and I've lost most of my muscle tone. When I left the hospital I was down to 145 pounds. In the last week I've gained eight pounds and have begun doing very light workouts with weights. Once I get the okay from my doctors, I'm going to attack the weight room like never before. I want to go back into the ring at 230 pounds. Like I said, I've got a long way to go, but with the support I've gotten from everyone, I feel there is nothing I can't accomplish.

To my friends and family and my fans I just want to say again how much I love you and appreciate everything that's been done for me. I'll see you in the ring before long.

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
T.V. SPORTS

CLOSE-UP

NIKITA KOLOFF



THE RAW POWER and strength of this muscular Russian has helped him earn the nicknames "The Russian Nightmare," "The Russian Road Warrior," and "Russia's Ambassador of Destruction" . . . Stands 6'2" and weighs 275 pounds . . . Is only 24 years old . . . His uncle is "The Russian Bear" Ivan Koloff . . . A native of Moscow, Russia . . . When the Soviet Union boycotted the 23rd Olympiad in Los Angeles, Nikita was denied the opportunity to compete in several events including wrestling, weightlifting, and the hammer throw . . . Was faced with the choice of holding on to his amateur status until the 1988 games or becoming a professional wrestler . . . Nikita had heard about his uncle Ivan's success in America since he was a young child . . . Was brought to the United States through the aid of Don Kernodle who, at the time, was still friendly with Ivan Koloff . . . Nikita's immediate goal upon turning pro was not necessarily to win matches and titles, but simply to prove that Russia is superior to America in every way . . . Wrestled his debut match on June 6, 1984, in Raleigh, North Carolina, against Brett Hart . . . Forced Hart to submit in 15 seconds with an inverted Russian backbreaker . . . Quickly established himself as a force to be reckoned with in the Mid-Atlantic area by similarly obliterating such opponents as Vinnie Valentino and Gary Royal . . . Was trained by his uncle Ivan, who closely monitored Nikita's progress . . . Wrestled in six-man competition with Don Kernodle and his uncle Ivan . . . Slowly but surely, Kernodle was ignored and neglected by the Russians . . . Kernodle turned away from his former partners and a feud between he and the Russians ensued . . . Krusher Khrushchev joined the Koloffs to form an awesome three-man Russian force in the NWA . . . Under his uncle's guidance, Nikita continued to improve significantly . . . Received nearly 13,000 votes in the fan voting for 1984 Rookie of the Year to finish a strong first runner-up . . . Early in 1985, the Koloffs and Khrushchev laid claim to the NWA World six-man tag team championship . . . On March 18, 1985, Ivan and Nikita captured the NWA World tag team title from Dusty Rhodes and Manny Fernandez in Fayetteville, North Carolina . . . The Russians quickly declared that any two of the triumverate of Koloff, Koloff, and Khrushchev could defend the world belts, and the NWA officials did not stop them . . . Khrushchev and Ivan handled the bulk of the tag team title defenses as Ivan geared Nikita up for a shot at Ric Flair and the NWA World title . . . Nikita sequestered himself in a dungeon and trained steadily for the match, which was set for July 6, 1985, at Charlotte Memorial Stadium . . . The Flair-Nikita match was dubbed "The Freedom Challenge" and was the main event of the first-ever "Great American Bash" card . . . As the result of an incident where Nikita angrily hit television announcer David Crockett with a clothesline during an interview, Crockett was named special referee for the match . . . The July 6 contest was a grueling war that lasted nearly 40 minutes . . . Flair scored a pinfall victory over an exhausted Nikita, but Ivan joined his nephew in a bloody post-match double-team attack on the champion . . . The July 6 match led to a series of Nikita-Flair confrontations . . . Flair has said that Nikita is perhaps the most formidable challenge anywhere to his title . . . The Nikita-Flair series even saw a first-time-ever lumberjack NWA World title match in Atlanta's Omni . . . Meanwhile, the combination of Ivan Koloff and Krusher Khrushchev had lost the NWA World tag team title to The Rock 'n' Roll Express on July 9 in Shelby, North Carolina . . . Nikita continues to challenge Flair for the NWA title, hoping to wear down the champion and capture the title very soon . . . In between title shots with Flair, Nikita has been wrestling with his uncle Ivan and Krusher Khrushchev in tag team matches and six-man tag competition . . . The Russians have battled The Road Warriors on several occasions . . . The Warriors-Russians matches have been hailed as uncommon demonstrations of brutality and force in the wrestling ring . . . The Warriors' manager, Paul Ellering, has called Nikita one of the few men who can offer a legitimate challenge to his team . . . Nikita and Ivan hope to mount a challenge to regain the NWA World tag team belts from The Rock 'n' Roll Express . . . With less than two years as a professional behind him, Nikita still has a long way to go in the sport . . . If he continues to improve in the future with the same speed he's improved thus far, Nikita will certainly go down in history as one of the all-time greats. □

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
T.V. SPORTS

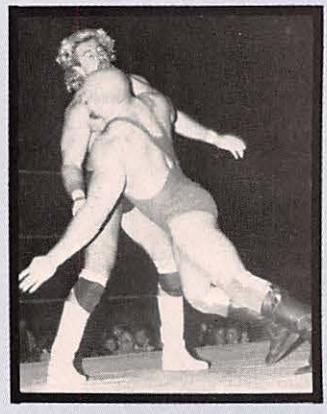
NIKITA KOLOFF

Russia's Ambassador Of Destruction

CLOSE-UP

TOUGHEST OPPONENT

The Road Warriors. There are few competitors who can adequately compare with Nikita's power. The Road Warriors are two men who not only match Nikita's strength, but who have come closest to sending him down in defeat. The feud between the Warriors and the Russians promises to be a lengthy and violent one.

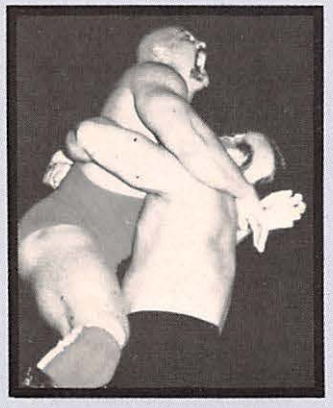


MOST HATED OPPONENT

Dusty Rhodes. Nikita is the personification of anti-Americanism, and it is only natural that "The Russian Nightmare" would harbor an intense hatred for the man known as "The American Dream." Whenever these two men step into the ring, they're battling for more than victory in a match—they're battling intensely for respective national pride.

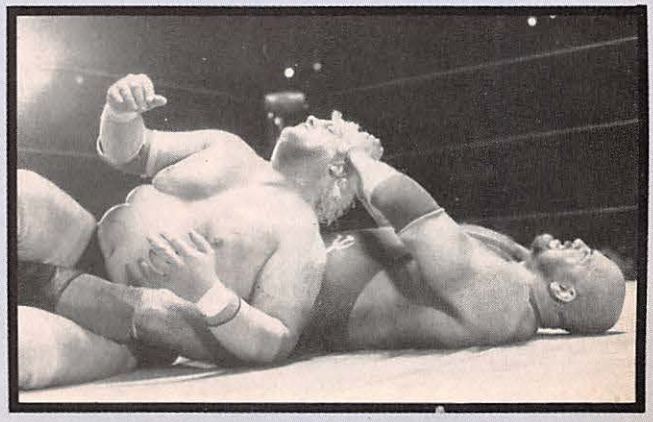
GREATEST MATCH

July 6, 1985 vs. Ric Flair. Dubbed "The Freedom Challenge" by the NWA, the Great American Bash main event was instead termed "The Road To Moscow" by Nikita and his uncle Ivan. This was Nikita's first NWA World title shot, and though he didn't win the belt as he had hoped, the match proved that Nikita would be a tough match for the champion for a long time to come.



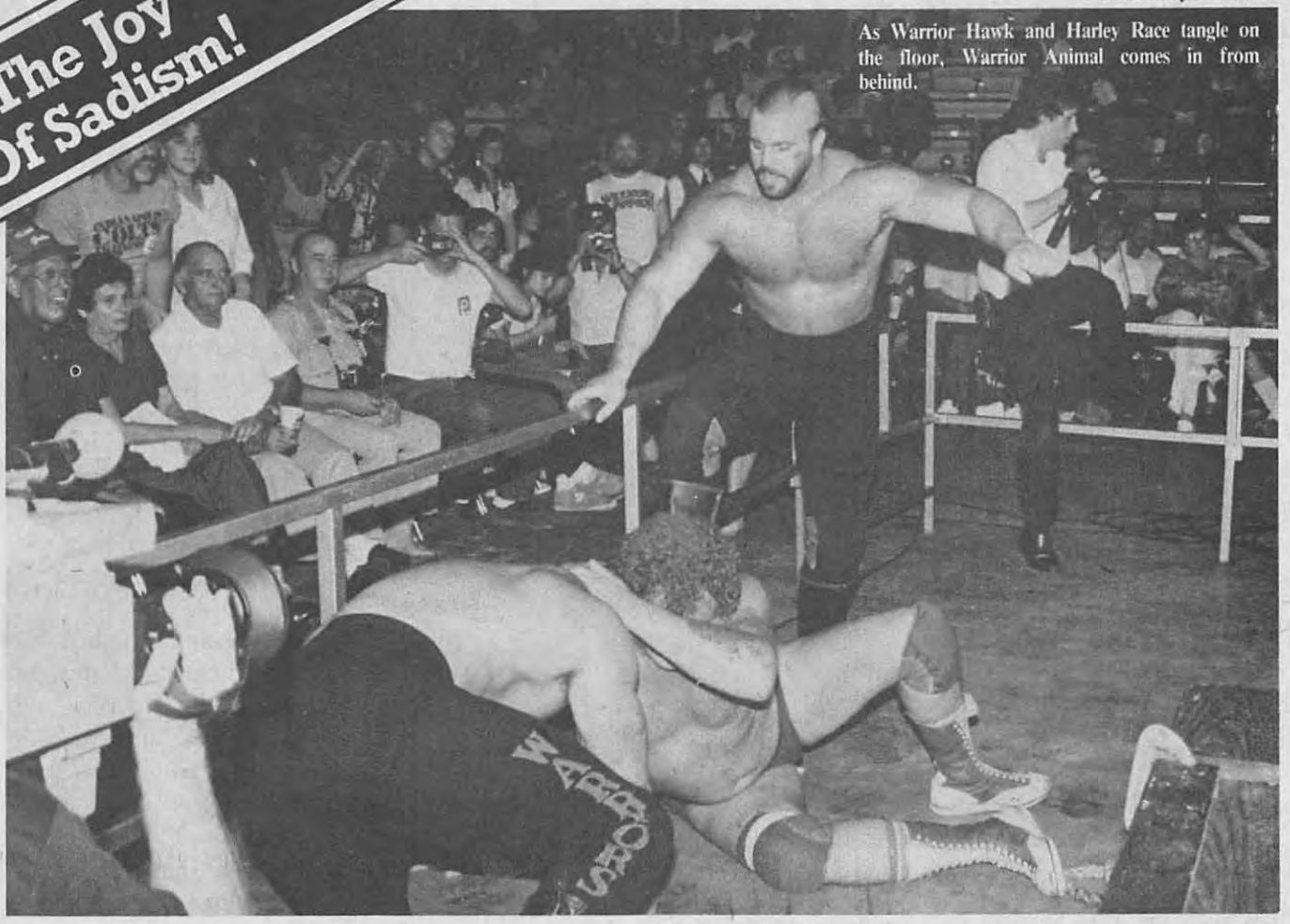
FAVORITE MANEUVER

The Russian sickle. When Nikita channels all of his natural raw power and strength into his arm and catches his opponent in a clothesline, the result is simply devastating. Nikita calls the move "the Russian sickle"; opponents call the move something to stay away from at all costs.



The Joy Of Sadism!

Photos by Bill Otten



As Warrior Hawk and Harley Race tangle on the floor, Warrior Animal comes in from behind.

THE ROAD WARRIORS INVITE YOU TO THEIR SMORGASBORD OF VIOLENCE!

AWA WORLD TAG team champions The Road Warriors have built their career on the devastation of all tag teams that cross their path. More often than not, the defense of their championship title is secondary to the infliction of pain and suffering on their opponents.

When Precious Paul Ellering brought Hawk and Animal to Florida to wrestle the team of Harley Race and Stan Hansen, the result was nothing short of pure Warrior-inspired sadistic mayhem.

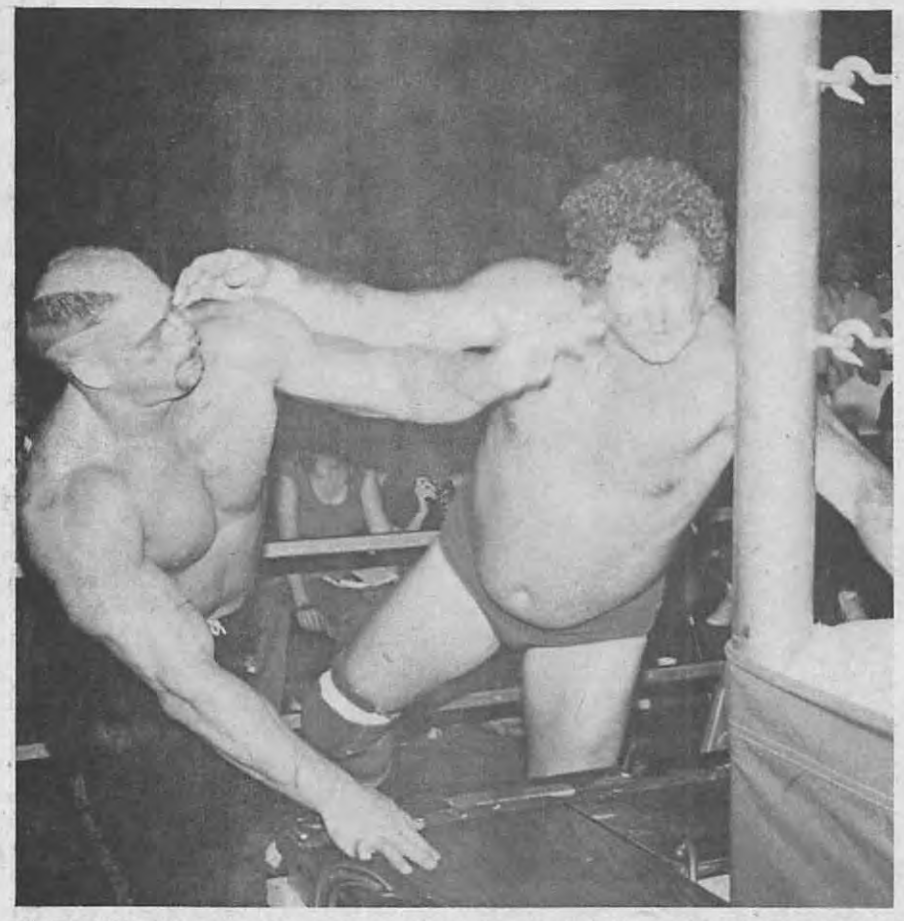
In this exclusive story, Ellering, Hawk, and Animal each provide their own personal perspective on that match, and provide a rare glimpse into the unique joy that they experience as they dish out pain and suffering—Road Warrior style!

Road Warrior Hawk: "Let me tell you something. Before the match, Paul came up to me and Animal and we had our prematch strategy meeting. Paul reminded us that Harley Race was a seven-time NWA World champion. He reminded us that Stan Hansen was the current Pacific Wrestling Federation heavyweight champion. He reminded us about Race's strategy and Hansen's lariat. You know what we said?

"We don't care!

"And we don't. Because we're the

When Hawk, Animal, and Precious Paul Ellering invite you to their table, you'd best refuse the invitation. The Warriors' typical feast is a smorgasbord of violence. To partake of simply an appetizer is to risk being crippled permanently!



The Road Warriors were anxious to wrestle Harley Race and Stan Hansen, two wrestlers who have "tough guy" reputations. Hawk shoves Race's face into the steel ringpost (above). Hansen unsuccessfully tries to get off his left before Hawk can fire his right (below).

toughest team in the sport, and we kick butt in places butts have never been kicked before. And when they leave the ring, they know they've been in with the Warriors.

"Take Race, for example. You know something, I can't figure out how he ever won the World title seven times. He's slow, out of shape, and has no strength at all.

"You know, there were two points in the match that I really enjoyed. One was holding that old man in a headlock. I could feel all three of his chins buckle under my bicep. And all I had to do was flex my arm, and my bicep shot into the side of his face. And he screamed louder. It was music to my ears.

"And then, when I smashed his head into the cornerpost, I thought his false teeth would come flying out onto the floor. You know what's best about that? When his skull cracked into the steel post, I could feel the vibrations all the way up into my shoulder. That feels better to my body than a postmatch rubdown!"

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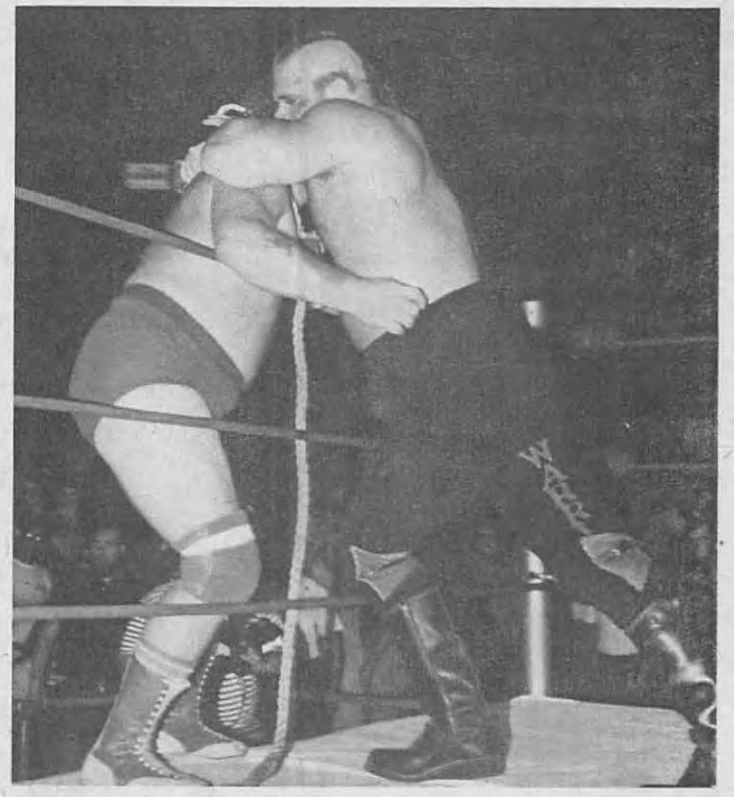
Road Warrior Animal: "You know, there's one thing I like to do in a match, and that's get a good workout. If I can't get any good challenging competition, I might as well get some exercise. That's why I like to use these chumps as dead weight and do a few presses in the ring when I get the chance.

"Hansen is a tough man, I'll give him some credit for that. We traded chest blows in the ring, and one or two of his actually stung me. But I'll tell you, when I planted a shot or two into Stan's chest, I backed him up about a half step with every shot. I was trying to crack his sternum. Was it fun? Hell yes! What spoiled it was that I didn't actually break the bone I was working on.

"And then that old man Race. Ha! Nothing better than planting a boot into a man's back and feeling the spine take on a new shape underfoot, the shape of the boot and the heel! And what's even better is that



Hawk got tremendous joy out of applying a headlock on Race and expanding his bicep into the former NWA champion's jaw (above left). Animal wraps a rope around Harley's neck and will drag him over the top rope and into the ring (above right). As Ellering looks on from ringside, Animal forces Race into enemy territory (below).

each time you kick a man in the back like that, his groan gets a little louder and lasts a little longer."

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Paul Ellering: "Sadism? Not particularly. Sadism is the enjoyment of watching cruelty, but containing an underlying sexual motif. Hawk and Animal simply have a good time beating up people. There's nothing perverse involved, it's only a matter of doing what comes naturally.

"Hawk and Animal are among those rare individuals that are lucky enough to enjoy their chosen professions. And they are rarer than that, in that they not only enjoy what they do, they do it better than anyone else in the world.

"When my Warriors took on Hansen and Race, the result was a thing of beauty, seldom seen in the wrestling world—even since Hawk and Animal rewrote the groundrules of the sport. Theirs was a methodical attack, precise in the manner in which they dismantled their opposition.

"Yes, I must say that I do enjoy watching the Warriors do what they do, and I believe that there are a lot of fans who enjoy it as well. There may be times when Harley Race or Stan Hansen are cheered in this wrestling world, but when Hawk and Animal step into the ring the attitude of the fans is boosted to a new level entirely. They know that they are about to witness perfection in destruction, and they cannot help but be awed and cheer.

"I offer our match with Hansen and Race as a prime example of what the Warriors are capable of. As the head chef of The Legion of Doom, I extend an invitation to all fans to drink a toast at our smorgasbord of violence. Certainly Stan Hansen and Harley Race have had their fill at our table of delights. Anyone with a strong stomach who feels they have the constitution to match—step right up! There are enough wares at our groaning board to appease every team in the sport!" □

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WRESTLING ENQUIRER

FLAIR-MARTEL UNIFICATION MATCH SIGNED

NWA-AWA Championship Super Bowl To Take Place In Japan

By MASANORI MURIKAMI
Special to PWI

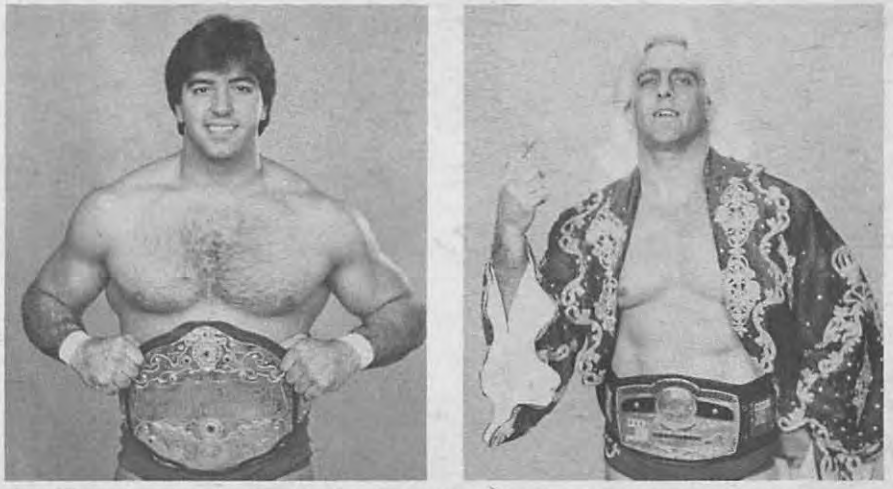
TOKYO—Following weeks of intense negotiations involving officials of the NWA and AWA, as well as Japanese promoters and the champions themselves, a world title vs. world title match has been signed between NWA World champion Ric Flair and AWA World champion Rick Martel. The contest will take place here in Tokyo.

The match will be one fall with a 60-minute time limit. Both championship belts will be at stake. Should either Flair or Martel score a pinfall or a submission, the winner will become champion of both the NWA and the AWA.

Major stumbling blocks on the way to signing the final contract reportedly involved the number of falls in the match, the referee who would officiate the contest, and the purse money to be paid to each man.

No specific financial details were announced, though one insider reported that both Flair and Martel will be receiving sums in the high six figures.

An interesting sidelight: On the same card, a tag team title vs. title match will take place as the AWA World tag team champions The Road Warriors will meet NWA International tag team champions Jumbo Tsuruta and Tenryu.



AWA World champion Rick Martel (left) and NWA World champion Ric Flair will finally have the chance to wrestle each other. The match will take place soon in Tokyo.

Rhodes' Ankle Broken In Vicious Attack

By CRAIG PETERS

ATLANTA—Dusty Rhodes' left ankle was broken in a brutal three-on-one attack by Ole and Arn Anderson and Ric Flair here in The Omni.

The attack followed a match in which Flair was defending his NWA World title against Nikita Koloff in a cage match. When Ivan Koloff and Krusher Khrushchev ran into the cage to triple-team Flair, Rhodes ran into the cage from the dressing room to help the champion defend himself.

Rhodes helped clear the Russians out of the cage, but seconds later Ole and Arn Anderson rushed into the cage and attacked Rhodes. Flair went to the cage door, locked it, and proceeded to help the Andersons triple-team "The American Dream."

Ole and Arn held Dusty on the mat as Flair moved to the top rope and dove on Rhodes' ankle. Flair then caught Dusty in the figure-four leglock while the Andersons held Rhodes' arms for added pressure.

Sam Houston, Magnum T.A., and The Rock 'n' Roll Express tried to climb over the top of the cage to save Rhodes. The Andersons held them off for a few minutes, but finally the cage was cleared and Dusty was taken to the hospital where he was X-rayed and treated.

Savage And Ventura Form Tag Team

By EDDIE ELLNER

NEW YORK—After months of lavishing praise on Randy "Macho Man" Savage from behind the announcer's microphone, Jesse "The Body" Ventura has stepped into the ring to join forces with Savage and create a combination that may in record time become the most formidable tag team power in the WWF.

For Ventura, the move marks a significant return to a full-time wrestling commitment following full recovery from a blood clot condition in the lungs late last year.

The move does come as a surprise as far as Savage is concerned, however. "The Macho Man" has often proclaimed his goal of dethroning WWF kingpin Hulk Hogan, and many WWF observers noted that Savage had a better chance than most wrestlers to defeat The Hulkster. Randy's new responsibilities as Ventura's partner, however, will undoubtedly take time away from that campaign.

Sherri Martel Wins AWA Women's Title

By BILL APTER

CHICAGO—Sherri Martel (no relation to AWA World heavyweight champion Rick Martel) captured the AWA Women's championship from Candi Divine here in Comiskey Park.

Divine, who was favored to win the match easily, maintained an advantage through most of the match. At about the 10-minute mark, however, Martel began to rally back and sustain an impressive counter-offensive that had the champion in serious trouble for the first time.

The end came at the 11:24 mark when Martel moved out of the way of Divine's attempted flying bodypress off the ropes and easily pinned the stunned champion.

"That bimbo didn't have a chance from the time the opening bell rang," Martel said in a postmatch press conference. "Now the wrestling world is going to know what a *real* women's wrestling champion is all about—and the AWA in particular is going to realize very quickly that the name 'Martel' doesn't have to stand for white bread, boredom, mediocrity, and the fracturing of the English language."

Sherri Martel displays her new AWA women's championship belt.

AROUND THE GLOBE

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

World Wrestling Council heavyweight champion Carlos Colon wants Dory Funk Jr.'s wife, Marti Funk, permanently banned from ringside. During several of Colon's defenses against the former NWA World champion, Marti got a bit carried away with herself when Dory was in danger—running into the ring with a pocketbook as her weapon and smashing Colon with it.

PENSACOLA, FL

Bob Armstrong has enlisted the aid of giant 7'8", 525-pound Big John Harris to help him in his quest to rid the Southeast Continental area of the Fullers, Robert and Ron, as well as Jimmy Golden. The three are responsible for injuring Bob's sons Scott and Steve, and Bob has sworn revenge no matter how long it may take.

SHREVEPORT, LA

Mid-South tag team champions Wendell Cooley and Al Perez say they are sorry that The Fantastics, Tommy Rogers and Bobby Fulton, are leaving the area. "We were looking for a chance to wrestle some real scientific competition," Perez said. "Now it looks like Ted DiBiase and Steve Williams will be getting a lot of title shots. We're confident we can beat them and retain our titles, but that scientific contest would have been great!"

LOOKING AT...

Matt Brock:

ANY WAY YOU want to slice it, 1985's been a damn tough year for wrestling.

Oh, I know plenty about the WrestleMania glitz and the feature stories in *People* and *Sports Illustrated* and *Dog Life* and what have you. And I'm as fed up with that stuff as you probably are. Wrestling has reached a much wider and much more shallow audience in 1985.

Hey, a couple of centuries back I was talking to a friend of mine in some joint in Hoboken that doubles as a bar and seafood place. We'd run out of things to gripe about and were watching the tube in a semi-daze. The guy on the local newscast announced that some young Hollywood idol, I forget his name, had been found dead in his motel room. Apparently, the kid grew up on a farm and hit Tinseltown as the biggest thing since Brando, and he didn't quite make it. My buddy, an English professor at a state college when he wasn't drinking me under the table, said it reminded him of a line that a poet upstate named Williams had written: "The pure products of America go crazy . . ."

I always did like that bit of verse. And it applies perfectly to the state of professional wrestling today. Professional wrestling, the catch-as-catch-can style we all know and love, is a pure product of America that's slowly being driven mad by the pressures and concessions of the limelight. Our sport's getting crazier than ever, and all this hype threatens to spoil a great sport that *deserves* to be called a national pastime.

Harley Race headlocks Dory Funk Jr. during their historic title match in 1973. Harley won the title that night and would go on to repeat that feat six more times.

Which brings us, in ol' Matt's typical roundabout fashion, to Harley Race.

I'll tell you straight out that I've been a big Harley Race fan since I first saw him in his rookie year (*awright*, already, those birthday candles are *blinding* me!). I remember when he was co-holder of the AWA tag team championship with Larry Hennig in the mid-'60s. "Handsome Harley Race," as he called himself then, caught a barrel of boos whenever he wrestled, and it didn't bother him then either. What *did* bother him was the guttersnipe gossip that circulated behind his back. Race is a bum, the dressing room scuttlebutt went, he's riding on Hennig's coattails to the top. Even back then, Harley had an unassuming manner in and out of the ring, and the "ex-

HARLEY RACE

perts" couldn't recognize the raw genius of his subtle technique.

It took singles wrestling to bring Mr. Race to the flowering of his glory. I was there that night in 1973 when he suplex-slammed another great champion, Dory Funk Jr., out of the record books and won his first NWA World title. Now your humble correspondent has seen, I would estimate, more than 50,000 matches. I have never seen a more beautiful exhibition of wrestling than Race's first world title victory. You just can't imagine more graceful, poetic grappling. (But I rambled on about this match in my "Looking Back" column for this January's issue of *The Wrestler.)* That's a match I think about a lot whenever I see some blow-dried kid with big biceps screw up a side headlock.

All through his seven NWA World title reigns, you kept hearing the same crap about Harley. "I don't understand how he does it!" "How can a man with so little talent be so successful?" "He keeps cheating and disqualifying himself!" That last criticism is partially true, but Race doesn't get by on cheating alone. If he had, he would have been a flash in the pan. The rest of the criticism was garbage, much of it strewn by jealous co-professionals. Harley Race is probably the *smartest* wrestler in the sport's history, and probably the most *defensive* as well. Any man who relies upon brains and cunning to win matches isn't going to excite people as much as the cute kids and the brawny offensive powerhouses. But he's going to win, and I can vouch for the fact that I never saw Harley beat *himself* in a match.

If Harley Race has lost a step, Billy Jack Haynes has found it—right in his face (above left). Race has defeated Crusher Blackwell several times (above), and Matt Brock was not surprised that he could still get the job done.

For my money, Harley Race is one of wrestling's few saviors in 1985. Now he has regained the Missouri State title, and he's back on top of the world, Ma. And as usual, people aren't giving him the proper credit for it; one hears the arrogant and downright stupid cries of "has-been" now. Ridiculous. There aren't more than a half-dozen wrestlers alive who can whip Harley, no matter how old he is. The Missouri State title used to be the NWA's second most prized singles belt; every Missouri champ rated the top contender's spot automatically. The belt has gotten a little tarnished over the past few years; Crusher Blackwell practically left it out in his front lawn, rarely defending it over nearly a year's time. Now that Race has it back, you can bet that he'll make the Missouri title mean something more. He promises, with his usual quiet self-assurance, that it *will* be his steppingstone to an eighth NWA World title.

I hate to doubt this man. □

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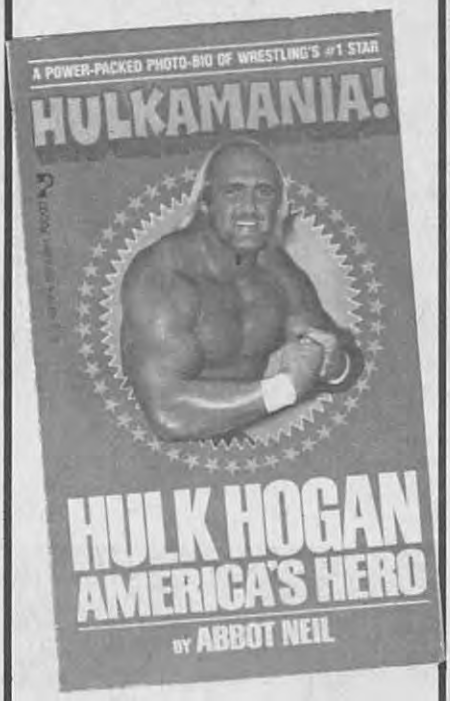

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(Continued from page 6)

circulation, then you'd be wise to grant Jesse the forum of a monthly column. At any rate, we, his loyal fans, would run pell-mell to our local stationer for a magazine containing the briefest mention of Jesse Ventura. We thought you should know that.

ALEX REY
Key West, FL

ROSES ARE YELLOW . . .

A few words on the yellow rose of Texas, Kerry Von Erich. My sister and I are tremendous fans of wrestling and our favorite, as he is with many others, is Kerry Von Erich. He always has a smile for his fans and an extra moment to sign autographs. We both subscribe to your magazine and think they are truly wonderful, especially in your coverage of the Von Erich family. I'm sure you get criticized by some because of what is considered "biased" coverage on the family. Such comments aren't rooted in fact. The Von Erichs are a wonderful family and set a good example for others both in and out of the ring. In addition, they are among the best wrestlers in the world. Kerry exemplifies this attitude. He walks to the ring with a gentle ease, caretaker of a famous name, and then becomes the Modern-Day Warrior in the ring. He is one of a kind and we love him.

SHEILA BELITZ
SHELLY BELITZ
McCloud, OK □

Kerry Von Erich is not only a superb wrestler, writes Sheila and Shelly Belitz, he's a perfect gentleman.

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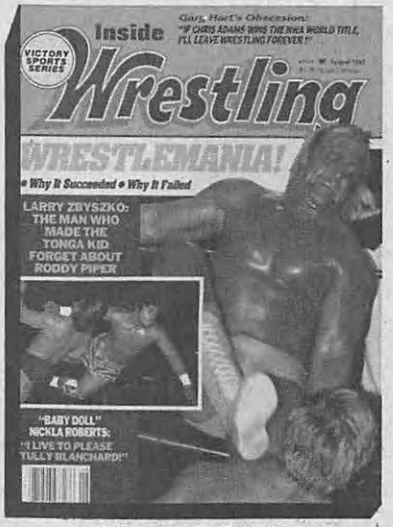
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DRESSING ROOM

(Continued from page 12)

Flair and was soon followed into the ring by Ole and Arn Anderson. Inexplicably, Flair, whose career might well have been saved by Dusty's brave act, assisted the Andersons in an ugly attack against "The American Dream."

X-rays of Dusty's left ankle revealed a broken bone, but they did not reveal his broken spirit. The Dream isn't even sure if he could reveal much about that. "I guess I'm just a trustin' fool," he said to me. "Flair's done a lot of things to a lot of people—including me—and I guess I was stupid. Maybe there is no such thing as true friendship anymore. Maybe I'm just the last of a dyin' bread. I dunno."

Flair wasn't worthy of Dusty's friendship. And it may be hard to convince Dusty of this while he's got a cast covering his foot, but he should not give up on people so quickly. There are plenty of good ones left.

For a while, we can all expect a major change in Dusty. He's not going to be the same Dusty Rhodes until he appeases himself by gaining a measure of revenge against Flair. He's going to become selfish. He's still going to "take care of business," only he's going to be taking care of his own business first and not concern himself with everybody else. In that sense, he'll be like Flair for a while. But it won't last forever.

In a world where the selfish and greedy appear to live the nicest lives, it is easy to give up on ideals that often make life difficult and painful. Ultimately, though, what kind of person fares better? Dusty made that decision a long time ago when he asked forgiveness for his years as a rulebreaker.

Yuppie is a word for the times. American dream is a concept for the ages. □

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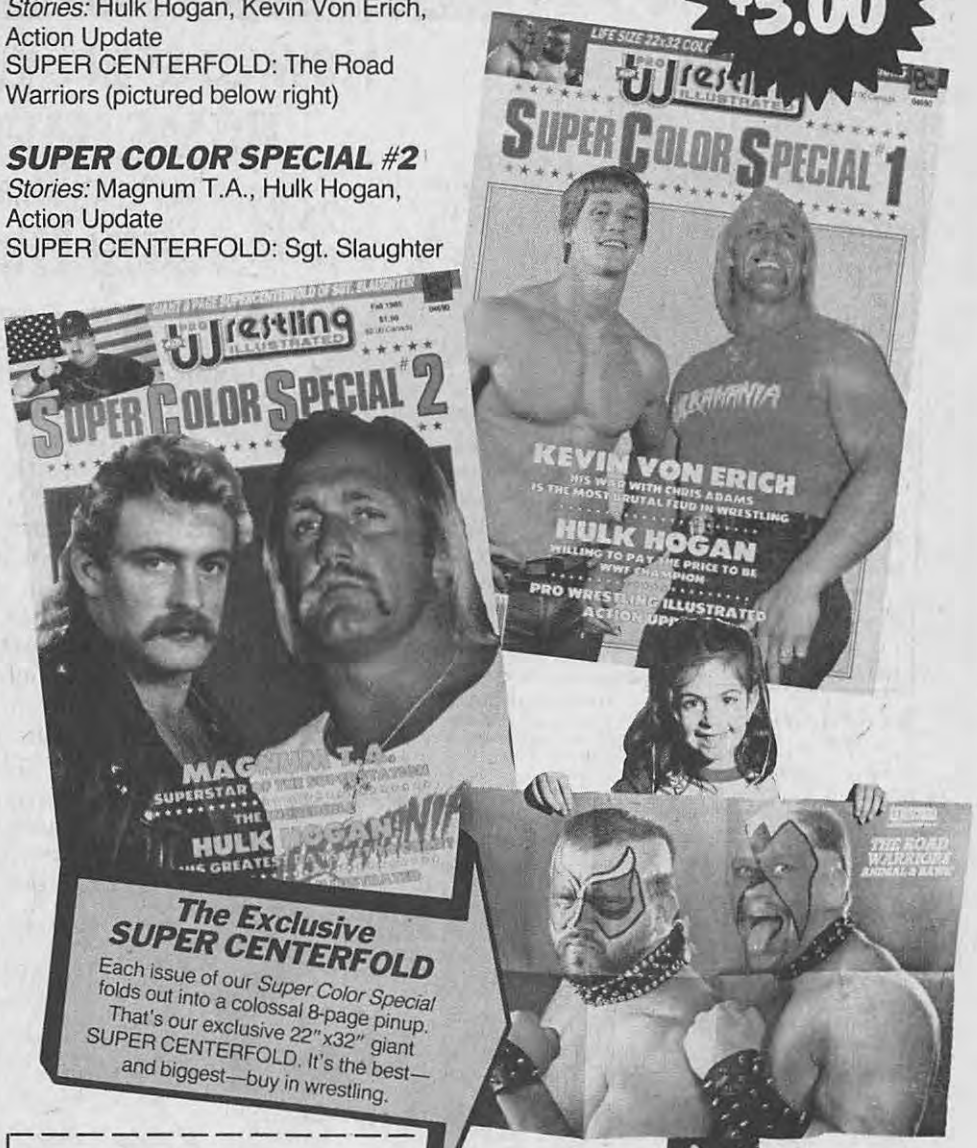

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PRESS CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 26)

Taylor seems to be gazing into the future as he holds Bart in a headlock. Could that future eventually include a tag team partnership with Magnum T.A.?

ther. This does not rule out the possibility that one day we might team together. Neither Magnum nor I have thought much about actively pursuing a tag team title lately. I mean, the prospect of being part of a team in what is normally perceived as an individual sport very exciting, as long as I would trust my partner's ability and reliability. With Magnum I have practically a mirror image of myself, in terms of speed and strategy. Someday I can see us working together as a tag team, but right now is the wrong time for that. Especially with Ric Flair running around with that 10 pounds of gold around his waist right now.

SAKS: Thanks for joining us here today Terry. Best of luck to you.

APTER: Yeah, Terry, thanks a lot.

ELLNER: Oh yeah Terry, thank you from the bottom of my feet to the top of my hat. Really, buddy, this is one of the red-letter days of my life. I don't know how I can ever thank you for this one, guy.

SAKS: Go home, Ellner. □

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ON ASSIGNMENT

(Continued from page 18)

Moolah gives a high-five to Sue Green—right across the face. Moolah had reached her prime by this point of her career in 1974.

est reference library on professional wrestling at their disposal. How could they ignore the great Moolah?

At first I thought it was the result of gender prejudice, that our crack staff didn't even think about women's wrestling when they were formulating their lists. I was quite mistaken. Confronting Messrs. King, Apter, Peters, Saks, and Ellner about Moolah's sorry exclusion led to a dead end of chauvinistic ignorance. I'd rather not repeat a couple of remarks, which were scatological in nature (I think these guys have been hanging around too many gyms and dressing rooms lately—alcoholic dockworkers would be embarrassed by their level of humor). It will suffice to say that none of them considered Moolah's achievement to be worthy of a Top 10 list; one editor actually accused me of tokenism, saying I would insist upon a female wrestler in the Top 10 no matter what her qualifications were.

I even phoned Matt Brock in Atlanta, and wrestling's most objective journalist agreed with the boys. "All of her opponents were *women*, fer Chrissake!" he snarled over the long-distance wires. "Let's face it—this is just like tennis. Even in her prime, she would have had a hard time pinning Andy Kaufman, much less a decent preliminary wrestler. She was the greatest *ladies'* wrestler, no more, no less!"

Frankly, the only staff member who selected Moolah wasn't of much help either. I attempted to seriously discuss the matter with Jim Schuermann, a kid who's only been here a few months, but I'm afraid his hormones haven't outgrown high school. My laundry bills are steep enough without having to dry-clean drool off my blouse.

It's not just Moolah's exclusion from some silly list that burns me, it's the attitude around here. The sniggering about Moolah's wrestling genius is merely indicative of our unofficial blacklist of the women in this sport. How many stories have we done about women over the past year? A couple about Wendi Richter, one about Misty Blue. That's about it. The pigs on the Ratings Committee won't even consider my suggestion to make the Women's Top 10 a permanent feature in our monthly ratings. For all intents and purposes, women's wrestling is as much a novelty to the editors here as it is to promoters across the country.

Let's face it, sisters, we're still living in the dark ages as far as the ring is concerned. I don't know if I can stand the narrow mindedness around here anymore. On behalf of the other pigs here, I apologize to great warriors past and present: Moolah, Richter, Vicki Williams, Judy and Joyce Grable, and so many others. Perhaps, someday, we shall overcome. □

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JULY 1985

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January 1986/COLOR POSTER: Hacksaw Duggan. Cover story: Hulk Hogan. PLUS: Magnum T.A., Brody, Gagne.

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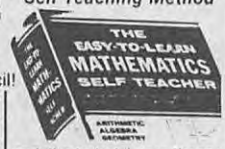

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OFF THE TOP ROPE

(Continued from page 20)

I like Orndorff, but the big fella would have no chance against the savvy and discipline of NWA champion Ric Flair.

Dear Eddie,

Do you think Paul Orndorff's change in attitude has hurt him? How do you think he would do against Ric Flair now, as opposed to his pre-WrestleMania days?

SCOTT CRUMP
Allison Park, PA

Dear Scott,

Any time a man does anything that would bring him into close association with Hulk Hogan and his pandering school of nitwits, it has to damage his career. Fortunately for Orndorff, his attitude throughout his career has been one of detatchment, one of allowing his actions to speak loudest. Hopefully, Hogan will resent Orndorff's inevitable rise in popularity enough to initiate a feud and end their relationship. Against Flair, an angry Paul Orndorff could inflict massive damage but would be unable to capture the crown. Flair is too smart to fall prey to Orndorff's powerful yet predictable brand of grappling.

Dear Sirs,

As an avid fan of pro wrestling, the editor of my own pro wrestling bulletin, and a reader of your magazine, I was disgusted with your choice to keep "Off The Top Rope" as a title for Eddie Ellner's column. This move alone has moved me to the point of not reading your magazine. If it weren't for the need of certain bits of information for my bulletin I would refrain from buying it.

I think you need to be reminded that there is one Dan Shocket, and he now lies in memory as should his column. Ellner is a fine writer, but he does not deserve the chance to fill Dan Shocket's space. As of this date I have yet to see anything impressive from Ellner, and that is putting it as nicely as possible. You have made a grave error in my eyes as well as the eyes of my co-writers and my readers. Let Ellner have the space, just give it another name. Let Dan Shocket be remembered as "Off The Top Rope."

JERRY WIESMAN
Indianapolis

Dear Jerry,

Where does one begin? Perhaps with a scathing condemnation of your fan bulletin, but then why afford a rag like yours a free plug in the world's largest-selling wrestling magazine? The point is, Jerry, that I welcome any and all types of attack on my character as long as the criticism is reasonably well thought out and consistent with the facts. I have taken exceptional pains in my first two columns to spell out my intention here in "Off The Top Rope." I do not seek to "fill" Dan Shocket's shoes. This I have stated so plainly that I thought anyone could understand, but obviously, with your letter, I have seriously overestimated the intelligence of some of my readers. Dan Shocket did not extend himself so courageously so that his ideas and analyses would be buried with him. The most lasting tribute to the man is to maintain his perspective and allow his voice to live within these pages. Whether I am the man who can do that is not the issue, nor has it ever been. □

(Continued from page 8)

Sam Houston tries to get away from an attacking Arn Anderson. Houston was hospitalized with a concussion after being victimized by Arn and Ole Anderson.

parking lot and was signing autographs when the Andersons and Blanchard rushed him from behind. They smashed his head into his car, kicked him in the face several times, then ran away. Houston spent the night in the hospital, but was released early the next morning.

Last issue, **Peter King** wrote in his "King's Court" column about how grossly out of shape **Andre the Giant** is. Well, I think Peter should take a look at **Adrian Adonis**—disgusting! He's too good an athlete to let himself go like that . . . **Bob Roop** no longer exists; at least that's what **Kevin Sullivan** is claiming. Roop is currently under Sullivan's satanic influence in the Florida area. His new name: **Maya Singh**. As if that name isn't strange enough, you should see Roop: He's shaved **half** his head! . . . I'm surprised, and a little disappointed, that **Paul Orndorff** hasn't made a bigger splash on the WWF scene following his conversion to fan favorite. I thought that "Mr. Wonderful" was capable of much more than what he's doing now—which is very little.

"Super Clash '85" has come and gone, and I want to say that it was a sensational card. It took place in Comiskey Park in Chicago, and featured several main-event matches. AWA World champion **Rick Martel** battled **Stan Hansen** to a wild double-disqualification finish that saw both men fighting all over the baseball diamond and even into the dugouts! NWA World champion **Ric Flair** was also on hand, and pinned **Magnum T.A.** in a successful title defense that was marred by controversy as ringside observers accused Flair of pulling T.A.'s trunks. **Sgt. Slaughter** scored an impressive victory for America by defending his Americas title against **Boris Zukhov**. **The Road Warriors** came close to losing their AWA World tag team belts to **The Fabulous Freebirds**, but the referee's decision was reversed by the AWA commission. Other stars on the card included **Jerry Blackwell**, **Kamala**, **Baron Von Raschke**, **Nikita Koloff**, **Ivan Koloff**, **Krusher Khrushchev**, **Mil Mascaras**, **Shohei Baba**, **Jumbo Tsuruta**, **Tenryu**, **Kerry Von Erich**, **Jim Garvin**, **Larry Zbyszko**, **Nick Bockwinkel**, **Greg Gagne**, **Crusher**, **Bruiser**, **The Long Riders**—and that's not even everyone! In all, eight current or former NWA, AWA, and WWF World champions were featured. This one has got to be considered the AWA card of the year!

You know, I may not like a lot of the things that the WWF is doing these days—personally, I think the **Hulk Hogan's Rock 'n' Wrestling** cartoon show is a disgrace to the sport—but I do have to give them some serious credit in one area. The WWF wrestlers have taped a series of public service announcements for use on the WWF TV shows. **Hillbilly Jim** talks about the importance of wearing seatbelts, for example, and **Tito Santana** reminds kids that when they go swimming they shouldn't swim alone. It makes me remember how **Gordon Solie** used to make missing children announcements on WTBS. It's a positive trend in the sport, and I salute it.

Bobby Jaggers earned the wrath of the Pacific Northwest fans by sneak-attacking popular Billy Jack Haynes.

Bobby Jaggers is now hated in the Pacific Northwest following his attack on **Billy Jack Haynes** while Haynes was wrestling **Rip Oliver** . . . **Brickhouse Brown** and **Norvell Austin**, who are the Southeast tag team champions and are known as **The Soul Patrol**, are really beginning to develop into a fine team . . . **Dick Slater** is now wrestling in the Mid-South and is now attended to by a valet. Slater claims he's not after any championship belts.

And please don't forget to watch me on **"Pro Wrestling Illustrated** Scouting Report," each Sunday evening at 7:05 p.m. (Eastern time) on **The Best Of World Championship Wrestling.** I'm anxious to read your letters containing reactions and suggestions to the segment.

That's all for now. See you at the matches! □

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TITO SANTANA

(Continued from page 29)

his title with maniacal regularity in the latter part of last year. "Is The Hulk In Danger Of Burning Out?" trumpeted a February 1985 *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* headline. Although the caliber of his opposition was somewhat mixed—needless to say, he never grappled other fan favorites—he embarked upon a grueling series of defenses that took him to all four corners of the big blue planet. As the above headline indicates, many insiders began to fear that Hogan was overcompensating for the earlier criticism.

Now, Hogan has steamed full circle back into semi-activity. Rumors abound, concerning injuries, show biz duties, and plain self-centeredness. The fact remains that Hogan is starting to seriously disappoint some of his fans.

Santana seems to be more aggressive in his second Intercontinental title reign. Tito grabs Savage by the hair and rams his face into the turnbuckle.

"I've been coming here [to Madison Square Garden] for more than 20 years," said Dennis Stantzberg, a front-row denizen at the Garden. Stantzberg, who installs burglar alarms for a living, is none too pleased about Hogan's relative inactivity. "I remember when Bruno Sammartino and Pedro Morales were champions, you didn't have to

Tito had a long and grueling series of matches with Greg Valentine before he was able to recapture the Intercontinental title. Tito gained a lot of respect from the wrestling community for the courage and determination he displayed against "The Hammer."

think twice about whether they'd be here every month. The only way they wouldn't show was if they were sick or hurt—and they'd have to be hurt bad.

"But I have my own WWF champion now," Stantzberg continued. "Tito Santana. Now there's a fighting champion. He's going up against all the cripplers they can dish out at him—Savage and Valentine and all those creeps—and he's doing it with a bum knee. He's amazing!"

Heidi Latham, a postgraduate veterinary student, wore an "ARRIBA!" rainbow-lettered T-shirt to the Garden. When asked about her favorite wrestler, she exclaimed, "Who *cares* about that musclebound clod Hogan! All he does is run away from the toughest guys in the Federation. He's afraid of Randy Savage, but Tito isn't—I hear he's stomping that Macho Man jerk all over the country. Tito doesn't run away from anyone!"

As Santana gains more adulation with every match, WWF rulebreakers aren't the only ones who stand to worry. Hulk Hogan is, conceivably, threatened more by Tito Santana than the entire WWF Top 20.

During his first Intercontinental title reign, Santana found himself grossly overshadowed by Hulkamania. Hogan's unprecedented popularity was a new thing in the Northeast then, and it took the wrestling world by storm. Tito could not have fairly been expected to challenge Hogan for the hearts of the fans, although he received more than his share of appreciative cheers. He also suffered from a few setbacks in major matches, before he ultimately lost his title.

Today, Santana is a vastly improved wrestler, even with his debilitated knee. His courage has deeply stirred fans previously lukewarm to him, and he's winning matches more convincingly than in his first Intercontinental title reign. If Hogan continues to pack his calendar with non-wrestling activities and ignores rulebreaking challengers who tangle with Santana, he could be in deep trouble with his fans.

As for now, the WWF has only one fighting champion. He could prove to be the People's Champion as well. □

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BARBARIAN

(Continued from page 31)

there in the gym. That weren't no damn accident, baby. What's that Barbarian weigh? Three hundred pounds? Three-twenty after a good meal? That ain't nothin', man. Nothin'! I'll eat him for breakfast and still have room left over for a half dozen eggs."

Reed's prolific might is the fodder of several yarns that are tossed about reverentially in locker rooms across the country. One tale has it that Reed wrestled in a small Oklahoma town some years ago at the same time that a carnival troupe was criss-crossing the state. The carnival boasted a strong man, Mr. Iron, who scaled over 400 pounds and stood an inch short of seven feet and whose particular feat of strength was to lift a phone booth crammed with people high into the air. It drew a full house every night.

After the matches one night, Reed and a few other wrestlers shared a few beers and went down to enjoy the carnival. As they passed Mr. Iron's booth, the other wrestlers couldn't resist needling Reed about Mr. Iron's prodigious strength. Reed confidently strode through the ornamental doors, past the throng of people waiting for the show to begin, and climbed onto the stage. He then issued a challenge. "I'm gonna show all you people who the strongest man in the world really is!" Reed said forcefully. The manager of Mr. Iron came on stage with a crowbar to scare Reed off the stage. Instead, Reed grabbed the weapon from the man's hands and announced to the crowd, "I'll bet that I can tighten this nut with my hands," he said, indicating a nut and bolt at the end of the crowbar, "so tight that Mr. Iron won't be able to loosen it with a wrench."

Whispers raced through the crowd. From the back came the initial shout, soon followed by several more: "Yeah, c'mon, Mr. Iron, show

(Continued on page 60)

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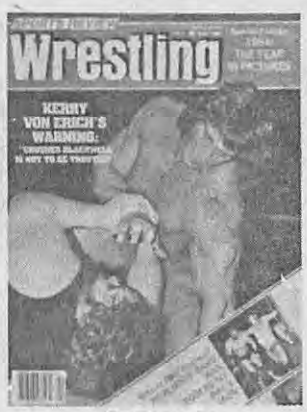

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BARBARIAN

(Continued from page 58)

Mid-South wrestling fans are excited by the prospect of a long series of matches between The Barbarian and Butch Reed. The Barbarian had the edge in this encounter, but few people believe that one match between such awesome competitors can be regarded as conclusive. The Barbarian assaults Reed outside the ring (above left). Reed is trapped from behind in a chinlock (above right).

this guy up. Boot him off, Mr. Iron."

Soon, Mr. Iron strode imperiously from behind the curtain and told the crowd that while he rarely gives in to such displays, he agreed to accept this stranger's challenge. Straight faced, Reed wrapped his thick fingers around the nut, gave it a short twist, and handed the bar to Mr. Iron. With a calculated gesture, Mr. Iron applied the wrench to the nut and twisted. Nothing happened. The huge man changed his grip and yanked. The nut wouldn't yield. The crowd began to stir. Beads of sweat appeared on Mr. Iron's forehead. With a loud groan he attacked the nut once more. It remained steadfast. The cries began. "Faker!" "Phoney!" The crowd began to file out.

Reed walked by his fellow wrestlers, who stared at him open-mouthed. One of them retrieved the crowbar, and it sits to this day in a Mid-South dressing room, much like Arthur's fabled Excalibur, where no one has yet been able to nudge the nut.

For all of its mythology, The Barbarian was completely unimpressed by Reed's exploits. "Do you know what a strong man in a carnival is?" he smoldered. "It's some fat guy they stick in a girdle, hand him some dummy weights, and surround him with a bunch of rubes who raise the roof with cheers. I can't even believe that you guys spread that story around. When I heard it for the first time, I almost busted a gut from laughing so hard."

The Barbarian's disrespect for Reed goes further than mere words. In their recent clash in Houston, the young rookie dazzled Reed with a fierce display of power moves both in and out of the ring. Although the match ended in a double-disqualification, it was The Barbarian who pranced back to the dressing room, while Reed needed assistance.

"Actions speak louder than words, that's all I've got to say," piped The Barbarian after the match. "Go tell Reed he better run away and join the circus."

It appears that if Butch Reed wishes to keep his reputation intact, he'd better forget about dusty triumphs in the weight room and at the carnival and turn his full attention to the wrestling ring. There's a Barbarian out there who hasn't been reading Butch's press clippings. □

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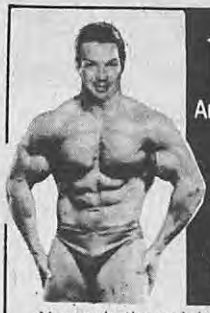

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KING'S COURT

(Continued from page 10)

● **Flair vs. Martel Signed:** You can't believe the politics behind this one. The NWA and the AWA have entered into this agreement very carefully, armed with pages upon pages of legal documents. I just got a look at the contract, and to say it's involved is to call *War And Peace* a short story. Perhaps a good addition to the card would be the AWA chief lawyer against the NWA chief lawyer—in a cage, of course.

Rick Martel is the number one man in the AWA. Should he be successful in his Japan match with Ric Flair, he could become the number one man in the NWA as well.

● **Dusty's Ankle Broken:** Ric Flair is a great wrestler, but sometimes I wonder what goes on inside his head. On the one hand, he demands respect. On the other hand, he triple-teams Dusty Rhodes along with the Andersons, breaking "The American Dream's" ankle in the process. Somehow, Ric, these two things don't go hand in hand. Flair is an

aggressive sort who often lets his worst instincts rule his career. And yet, he has all this superb talent. Ric Flair reminds me of a 30-million-dollar airport with a 20-dollar control tower.

● **Mike Von Erich Recovering:** In last issue's "Enquirer," one of our headlines concerned Mike Von Erich's

Mike Von Erich is on the way to a full recovery following a successful victory in his most frightening bout ever: against toxic shock syndrome.

condition just hours after he was felled by toxic shock syndrome. As we were going to press, there wasn't an editor who thought Mike would be alive by the time the magazine hit the newsstands. And as this month's exclusive story by Kevin Von Erich reveals, no one else—including Mike's doctors or his family—thought Mike would make it either.

Which is why this month's cover story was so pleasant for us to do. We have been accused many times of printing only "bad news." Of course, it's our job to report on wrestling as it is, not as the promoters want you to believe it is. When we get the chance to print a story as uplifting as this month's Von Erich story, we all feel a little better about our profession. □

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BRENDAN BYRNE ARENA (East Rutherford, NJ): **King Kong Bundy** won a 22-man, $50,000 battle royal . . . **Tony Atlas** defeated **The Missing Link** . . . **Nikolai Volkoff** defeated **Ivan Putski** . . . **Pedro Morales** defeated **Magnificent Muraco** by disqualification . . . **The Killer Bees** drew with **Jim Neidhardt & Brett Hart** . . . **Iron Sheik** defeated **Cousin Junior** . . . **King Tonga** defeated **Moondog Spot** . . . **King Kong Bundy** defeated **Jose Luis Rivera** . . . **Big John Studd** beat **Gatorwolf.**

—Howie Faust

CAPITAL CENTRE (Landover, MD): **Hulk Hogan** defeated **Greg Valentine** . . . **Junkyard Dog** won a 21-man battle royal . . . **Big John Studd** defeated **Junkyard Dog** . . . **Cousin Junior** defeated **Adrian Adonis** by disqualification . . . **Jim Neidhardt** defeated **Davey Boy Smith** . . . **Dynamite Kid** defeated **Brett Hart** . . . **Cowboy Bob Orton** conquered **Lanny Poffo** . . . **Magnificent Muraco** denied **Gatorwolf.**

—Jason Wilson

PITTSBURGH CIVIC ARENA (Pittsburgh): **The British Bulldogs** shared a $50,000 purse by winning a 20-man battle royal . . . **Randy Savage** bested **Tito Santana** . . . **The British Bulldogs** drew with **Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** . . . **King Tonga** defeated **Mike Sharpe** . . . **David Sammartino** defeated **Tiger Chung Lee** . . . **Adrian Adonis** defeated **Swede Hanson** . . . **Cowboy Bob Orton** defeated **S.D. Jones.**

—Mike L. Rossi

THE COLISEUM (Columbia, SC): **Dusty Rhodes, Magnum T.A., & Manny Fernandez** defeated **The Andersons & Tully Blanchard** . . . **The Rock 'n' Roll Express** defeated **Abdullah the Butcher & Konga the Barbarian** . . . **Buddy Landell** defeated **Ron Bass** by disqualification . . . **Krusher Khrushchev** defeated **Ricky Reeves** . . . **Billy Graham** defeated **Sam Houston** . . . **Joel Deaton** defeated **Stoney Burke.**

—Jack L. Murphy

McELROY AUDITORIUM (Waterloo, IA): **Tito Santana** defeated **Randy Savage** by countout . . . **The Killer Bees** defeated **Nikolai Volkoff & The Iron Sheik** . . . **Jesse Ventura** defeated **Ivan Putski** . . . **Mad Dog Vachon** defeated **Rene Goulet** . . . **Missing Link** defeated **S.D. Jones.**

—Duane Melsh

MAPLE LEAF GARDENS (Toronto): **Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo** defeated **Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** . . . **Wendi Richter** defeated **Lelani Kai** . . . **Andre the Giant** conquered **Big John Studd** by disqualification . . . **Rick Steamboat** defeated **Matt Borne** . . . **Jesse Ventura** defeated **Jim Young** . . . **The British Bulldogs** defeated **Mr. X & Terry Gibbs** . . . **Brett Hart** defeated **Goldie Rogers.**

—Craig Matheson

OHIO STATE FAIR (Columbus, OH): **Hulk Hogan** defeated **Big John Studd** by countout . . . **Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo** defeated **Greg Valentine & Brutus Beefcake** . . . **Paul Orndorff** defeated **Iron Sheik** . . . **The Magnificent Muraco** beat **Tony Atlas** . . . **Junkyard Dog** defeated **Les Thornton** . . . **Missing Link** defeated **S.D. Jones.**

—Kevin Blair

MECCA AUDITORIUM (Milwaukee): **Ivan Putski** won a $30,000, 16-man battle royal . . . **Junkyard Dog** defeated **Iron Sheik** . . . **Missing Link** defeated **Mad Dog Vachon** . . . **Adrian Adonis** defeated **Ivan Putski** . . . **Cowboy Bob Orton** defeated **S.D. Jones** . . . **Jim Brunzell** defeated **Brett Hart** . . . **Tony Atlas** defeated **Barry O.**

—Jeff Hagen

L.A. SPORTS ARENA (Los Angeles): **Hulk Hogan** defeated **Big John Studd** . . . **Rick Steamboat** defeated **Magnificent Muraco** by disqualification . . . **Terry Funk** trashed **Junkyard Dog** . . . **The British Bulldogs** defeated **Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** . . . **Adrian Adonis** overpowered

George Wells ... **Cpl. Kirschner** defeated **Moondog Spot** ... **The Missing Link** defeated **Rick McGraw** ... **Randy Savage** defeated **Mr. Wrestling II** ... **Ivan Putski** defeated **Steve Lombardi.**

—Mike Ballard

PROVIDENCE CIVIC CENTER (Providence, RI): **Cousin Junior** won a 20-man battle royal ... **Jesse Ventura** defeated **Hulk Hogan** by disqualification ... **Missing Link** defeated **Ron Dee** ... **Brett Hart** defeated **B. Brian Blair** ... **Pedro Morales** defeated **Greg Valentine** by disqualification ... **Brutus Beefcake** defeated **Gatorwolf** ... **Jim Brunzell** defeated **Jim Neidhardt** ... **Tony Atlas** defeated **Steve Lombardi** ... **Cpl. Kirschner** defeated **Mr. X.**

—Jeff and Rhonda Grenier

TULSA CIVIC CENTER (Tulsa, OK): **Hacksaw Jim Duggan & Skandor Akbar** wrestled to a double-disquaification ... **Jake Roberts** defeated **Bruiser Bob Sweetan** ... **Lord Humongous** defeated **Dick Murdoch** by disqualification ... **Butch Reed** defeated **The Barbarian** ... **Chris Adams** defeated **Brian Adidas** ... **Dutch Mantel & Bill Dundee** bested **The Fantastics** ... **Kerry Von Erich** defeated **The Nightmare.**

—Bif Logenheim

RIVIERA HOTEL & CASINO (Las Vegas, NV): **Jerry Blackwell & Rick Martel** defeated **Buddy Roberts & Terry Gordy** ... **Larry Zbyszko** defeated **Sgt. Slaughter** by disqualification ... **Curt Hennig** and **Jim Garvin** wrestled to a 20-minute draw ... **Boris Zhukov** defeated **Brad Rheingans** ... **Greg Gagne** defeated **Nick Bockwinkel** by disqualification.

—Jay Elliott Jr.

PORTLAND MEMORIAL COLISEUM (Portland, OR): **Ric Flair** drew with **Magnum T.A.** ... **The Road Warriors** defeated **Sgt. Slaughter & Billy Jack Haynes** by disqualification ... **Steve Simpson & Joe Savoldi** defeated **Mean Mike Miller & Karl Steiner** ... **Ivan Koloff & Krusher Khrushchev** defeated **Bobby Jaggers & Steve Pardee** ... **Ricky Vaughan** defeated **Moondog Eddie Moretti** ... **Alexis Smirnoff** defeated **Scott Doring** ... **Rip Oliver** defeated **Chris Colt** ... **Jesse Barr** and **Bruiser Brody** wrestled to a draw.

—Jerry Buchholz

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN (New York): **Andre the Giant** defeated **King Kong Bundy** by disqualification ... **Junkyard Dog** defeated **Terry Funk** by disqualification ... **British Bulldogs** defeated **Brett Hart & Jim Neidhardt** ... **Rick Steamboat** defeated **Magnificent Muraco** by disqualification ... **Missing Link** defeated **Lanny Poffo** ... **Cowboy Bob Orton** defeated **S.D. Jones.**

—Ken Perrin

MONTREAL FORUM (Montreal): **Tito Santana** defeated **Sailor White** ... **Dino Bravo & King Tonga** defeated **Greg Valentine & Brutus Beefcake** by disqualification ... **Gino Brito Jr.** defeated **Dick Charland** ... **Raymond Rougeau & Jacques Rougeau Jr.** defeated **Rene Goulet & Iron Mike Sharpe** ... **Tony Atlas** drew with **Jos LeDuc** ... **Uncle Elmer & Cousin Junior** defeated **Mad Dog Lefebvre & Destroyer I** ... **Tiger Chung Lee** defeated **Ivan Putski** ... **B. Brian Blair** beat **Barry O.**

—Anne Chauvon

BOSTON GARDENS (Boston): **Hulk Hogan** defeated **King Kong Bundy** by disqualification ... **Uncle Elmer, Ivan Putski, & Pedro Morales** defeated **Brutus Beefcake, Greg Valentine, & John Valiant** ... **Terry Funk** defeated **George Wells** ... **Adrian Adonis** defeated **S.D. Jones** ... **Cpl. Kirschner** defeated **Moondog Spot** ... **Missing Link** defeated **Swede Hanson** ... **Lanny Poffo** drew with **Iron Mike Sharpe.**

—Tim Utley

RECAP: It was a big month for **The British Bulldogs**, who continue to be the most impressive tag team in the WWF ... **Cousin Junior** continues to win despite displaying little ring talent ... The **Ric Flair-Magnum T.A.** feud reminds some old-time sports fans of the Brooklyn Dodgers-New York Giants dogfights of the 1950s—competitive, exciting, and the outcomes are always in doubt ... **Hulk Hogan** looked impressive this month, although rumors of a serious knee injury are still circulating ... Ringsiders continue to marvel at the raw power displayed when **Butch Reed** wrestles **The Barbarian** ... If **Big John Studd** could wrestle half as well as he talks, he'd be undisputed champion of the world. □

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I Love Games	111 W. Ave. Palizada, San Clemente	(714) 498-3895
Game Keeper	117 Glendale Galleria, Glendale	(818) 242-1700
Game Keeper	2148 N. Wolf Rd., Cupertino	(408) 257-5010
Game Keeper	4465 LaJolla Village Dr., La Jolla	(619) 453-5663
Gamesmanship	3333 Bristol, Costa Mesa	(714) 557-2447
Purposeful Pastimes	37 Peacock Allley, Rolling Hills	(213) 377-5077

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Compleat Strategist	5406-8 Stirling Rd., Davie	(305) 961-5660

GEORGIA

Sword of the Phoenix	Lenox Sq. Mall, Atlanta	(404) 231-4244
Games 'N Gadgets	Perimeter Mall, Atlanta	(404) 394-9813

ILLINOIS

Hobby World	Ford City Mall, Chicago	(312) 582-5267
Beyer's Hobby	236 Main St., Woodstock	(815) 338-1640

KENTUCKY

Something to Do	Bashford Manor Mall, Louisville	(502) 456-1720
Something to Do	Oxmoor Center, Louisville	(502) 425-5257

MASSACHUSETTS

Name of the Game	Faneuil Hall, Boston	(617) 367-1979
Compleat Strategist	201 Mass. Ave., Boston	(617) 267-2451
Games People Play	1105 Mass. Ave., Cambridge	(617) 492-0711
Fabulous Fiction	587 Park Ave., Worcester	(617) 754-8826

MARYLAND

Compleat Strategist	231 Park Ave., Baltimore	(301) 752-1493
Patowmack Toy	1254 Columbia Mall, Columbia	

MICHIGAN

Tait's Hobby	326 Fashion Sq. Mall, Saginaw	(517) 799-3900

MINNESOTA

Games by James	1561 S. Plymouth Rd., Minnetonka	(612) 546-5446

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Yankee Doodle	6831 Longview Rd., Kansas City	(816) 761-1113
Epic Gallery	Village Sq. S/C, Hazelwood	(314) 731-5610

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The Game Keeper	4300 Meadows Ln., Las Vegas	(702) 878-1188

NEW YORK

Compleat Strategist	11 E. 33 St., New York City	(212) 685-3880
Compleat Strategist	320 W. 57 St., New York City	(212) 582-1272
Winners	Green Acres Mall, Valley Stream	(516) 825-5575
Waterloo Hobbies	240 Mineola Blvd., Mineola	(516) 747-6919
La Toys, Etc.	76 Columbia Ave., Cedarhurst	(516) 569-1112
Comic Cottage	363 E. Park Ave., Long Beach	(516) 431-8938
Rocky's News	447 N. Salina St., Syracuse	
Silver Star Comics	3554 Nostrand Ave., Brooklyn	(718) 648-2112
Hobbies 'N Such	108-22 Queens Blvd.	(718) 268-2155

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Game Master	Village Mall, Bergen Mall, Paramus	(201) 843-3308
Compleat Strategist	215 Glenridge Ave., Montclair	(201) 744-6622
Game World	Chester Spring S/C, Chester	(201) 879-7300
Game World	Burlington Center, Burlington	
The Game Room	201 Woodbridge Center, Woodbridge	(201) 636-1111
Woodmont Stationers	8 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Montvalle	(201) 391-1717

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Compleat Strategist	Valley Forge S/C, King of Prussia	(215) 265-8562
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Electronics Boutique	Exton Sq. Mall, Exton	(215) 363-9797
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Compleat Strategist	103 E. Broad St., Falls Church	(703) 532-2477
What's Your Game	Springfield Mall, Springfield	

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
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PWI's Top 10 is based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board.

PWI's TOP 10

Tito Santana

SINGLES

1. **RIC FLAIR**
   243, Minneapolis, MN
   NWA World champion
2. **RICK MARTEL**
   236, Quebec City, Quebec
   AWA World champion
3. **HULK HOGAN**
   302, Venice Beach, CA
   WWF World champion
4. **TULLY BLANCHARD**
   235, San Antonio, TX
   U.S. heavyweight champion
5. **DUSTY RHODES**
   302, Austin, TX
   NWA TV champion
6. **TITO SANTANA**
   245, Mission, TX
   WWF Intercontinental champion
7. **TERRY TAYLOR**
   225, Vero Beach, FL
   National heavyweight champion
8. **NIKITA KOLOFF**
   275, Moscow, Russia
   No. 4 contender to NWA World title
9. **MAGNUM T.A.**
   245, Chesapeake, VA
   No. 1 contender to U.S. title
10. **SGT. SLAUGHTER**
    310, Parris Island, SC
    Americas champion

TAG TEAMS

1. **THE ROAD WARRIORS**
   AWA World tag team champions
   Combined weight: 567 pounds
2. **RICK MORTON & ROBERT GIBSON**
   NWA World tag team champions
   Combined weight: 453 pounds
3. **GREG VALENTINE & BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
   WWF World tag team champions
   Combined weight: 511 pounds
4. **OLE & ARN ANDERSON**
   National tag team champions
   Combined weight: 525 pounds
5. **AL PEREZ & WENDELL COOLEY**
   Mid-South tag team champions
   Combined weight: 451 pounds
6. **CHRIS ADAMS & GINO HERNANDEZ**
   No. 1 contenders to World Class tag team title
   Combined weight: 454 pounds
7. **DENNIS CONDREY & BOBBY EATON**
   No. 1 contenders to NWA tag team title
   Combined weight: 472 pounds
8. **WAHOO McDANIEL & BILLY JACK HAYNES**
   U.S. tag team champions
   Combined weight: 505 pounds
9. **STEVE KEIRN & STAN LANE**
   Mid-Southern tag team champions
   Combined weight: 479 pounds
10. **BARRY WINDHAM & MIKE ROTUNDO**
    No. 1 contenders to WWF tag team title
    Combined weight: 475 pounds

NWA, AWA, and WWF ratings, in addition to the regional ratings from around the country, are based on the official current position of challengers to the top title in each category. (Certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings). Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and mail that comes to our offices.

NWA

World Champion:
RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN

1. **TULLY BLANCHARD** *235, San Antonio, TX*
2. **DUSTY RHODES** *302, Austin, TX*
3. **TERRY TAYLOR** *225, Vero Beach, FL*
4. **NIKITA KOLOFF** *275, Moscow, Russia*
5. **MAGNUM T.A.** *245, Chesapeake, VA*
6. **RICK RUDE** *246, Robbinsdale, MN*
7. **WAHOO McDANIEL** *260, Midland, TX*
8. **KERRY VON ERICH** *260, Denton, TX*
9. **HARLEY RACE** *253, Kansas City, MO*
10. **BRIAN ADIDAS** *238, Denton, TX*

AWA

World Champion:
RICK MARTEL
236, Quebec City, Quebec

1. **SGT. SLAUGHTER** *310, Parris Island, SC*
2. **LARRY ZBYSZKO** *248, Pittsburgh, PA*
3. **JIM GARVIN** *235, Tampa, FL*
4. **MICHAEL HAYES** *255, Marietta, GA*
5. **NICK BOCKWINKEL** *245, Beverly Hills, CA*
6. **BORIS ZUKHOV** *254, Leningrad, Russia*
7. **GREG GAGNE** *220, Robbinsdale, MN*
8. **BUCK ZUMHOFE** *222, Hamburg, MN*
9. **CURT HENNIG** *235, Minneapolis, MN*
10. **RAY STEVENS** *243, San Francisco, CA*

WWF

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA

1. **TITO SANTANA** *245, Mission, TX*
2. **MAGNIFICENT MURACO** *274, Sunset Beach, HA*
3. **RICK STEAMBOAT** *238, Honolulu, HI*
4. **RANDY SAVAGE** *245, Sarasota, FL*
5. **RODDY PIPER** *231, Scotland*
6. **PAUL ORNDORFF** *253, Brandon, FL*
7. **ANDRE THE GIANT** *505, Grenoble, France*
8. **JUNKYARD DOG** *260, New Orleans, LA*
9. **TERRY FUNK** *247, Amarillo, TX*
10. **KING KONG BUNDY** *446, Atlantic City, NJ*

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

1. **TULLY BLANCHARD** *235, San Antonio, TX*
2. **TERRY TAYLOR** *225, Vero Beach, FL*
3. **DUSTY RHODES** *302, Austin, TX*
4. **NIKITA KOLOFF** *275, Moscow, Russia*
5. **MAGNUM T.A.** *245, Chesapeake, VA*
6. **RONNIE GARVIN** *231, Montreal, Quebec*
7. **JIMMY VALIANT** *251, New York, NY*
8. **MANNY FERNANDEZ** *245, El Paso, TX*
9. **SAM HOUSTON** *218, Waco, TX*
10. **KONGA THE BARBARIAN** *265, Chicago*

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

For period ended October 2, 1985

WORLD CLASS

1—ICEMAN PARSONS
242, St. Louis, MO
2—BRIAN ADIDAS
238, Denton, TX
3—BRUISER BRODY
284, Albuquerque, NM
4—GINO HERNANDEZ
224, Houston, TX
5—KEVIN VON ERICH
239, Denton, TX
6—CHRIS ADAMS
230, Stratford, England
7—KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX
8—ONE MAN GANG
468, Chicago, IL
9—KABUKI
252, Singapore
10—KILLER BROOKS
235, Lancaster, TX

MID-SOUTH

1—DICK MURDOCH
270, Waxahachie, TX
2—BUTCH REED
265, Kansas City, MO
3—HACKSAW DUGGAN
280, Glens Falls, NY
4—TED DiBIASE
247, Omaha, NB
5—JAKE ROBERTS
243, Baton Rouge, LA
6—HUMONGOUS
318, parts unknown
7—THE BARBARIAN
316, parts unknown
8—STEVE WILLIAMS
295, Tulsa, OK
9—DICK SLATER
235, Tampa, FL
10—BUZZ SAWYER
240, St. Petersburg, FL

FLORIDA

1—RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN
2—KENDELL WINDHAM
220, Sweetwater, TX
3—WAHOO McDANIEL
260, Midland, TX
4—BILLY JACK HAYNES
245, Portland, OR
5—KEVIN SULLIVAN
239, Boston, MA
6—MIKE GRAHAM
229, Tampa, FL
7—PLAYBOY BUDDY ROSE
245, Minneapolis, MN
8—BOB ROOP
273, Tampa, FL
9—BUGSY McGRAW
268, New York, NY
10—JACK HART
230, St. Petersburg, FL

MID-SOUTHERN

1—JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
2—KOKO WARE
229, Union City, TN
3—MONGOLIAN STOMPER
259, Mongolia
4—PHIL HICKERSON
238, Jackson, TN
5—TARRUS BALBA
237, Outer Mongolia
6—BOTA
270, Maori Islands
7—TOJO YAMAMOTO
230, Tokyo, Japan
8—LORD JONATHAN BOYD
255, Aucklund, New Zealand
9—RIP MORGAN
250, Auklund, New Zealand
10—BILLY TRAVIS
218, Houston, TX

CONTINENTAL

1—TOMMY RICH
238, Hendersonville, TN
2—EXOTIC ADRIAN STREET
227, South Wales
3—THE FLAME
305, parts unknown
4—JIMMY GOLDEN
234, Montgomery, AL
5—ROBERT FULLER
238, Dyresburg, TN
6—BRAD ARMSTRONG
226, Marietta, GA
7—ROBERTO SOTO
231, San Juan, Puerto Rico
8—RON FULLER
285, Dyresburg, AL
9—BILL ASH
224, Paris, AK
10—ROY WELCH
224, Tampa, FL

NORTHWEST

1—RICKY VAUGHAN
245, Tampa, FL
2—MIKE MILLER
260, Memphis, TN
3—BOBBY JAGGERS
265, Dunlap, KS
4—ALEXIS SMIRNOFF
255, Russia
5—TIMOTHY FLOWERS
245, New York, NY
6—JOE SAVOLDI
232, Parsippany, NJ
7—STEVE SIMPSON
220, Africa
8—CHRIS COLT
230, San Fransisco, CA
9—MOONDOG MORETTI
245, Boise, ID
10—SCOTT DORING
270, Minneapolis, MN

MOST POPULAR

1—HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA
2—MAGNUM T.A.
245, Chesapeake, VA
3—DUSTY RHODES
302, Austin, TX
4—KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX
5—RICK MARTEL
236, Quebec City, Quebec
6—RICK STEAMBOAT
238, Honolulu, HI
7—KEVIN VON ERICH
239, Denton, TX
8—TERRY TAYLOR
225, Vero Beach, FL
9—SGT. SLAUGHTER
310, Parris Island, SC
10—TITO SANTANA
245, Mission, TX

MOST HATED

1—TULLY BLANCHARD
235, San Antonio, TX
2—RODDY PIPER
231, Glasgow, Scotland
3—MAGNIFICENT MURACO
274, Sunset Beach, HI
4—CHRIS ADAMS
230, Stratford, England
5—TED DiBIASE
247, Omaha, NB
6—NIKITA KOLOFF
276, Moscow, Russia
7—RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN
8—RANDY SAVAGE
245, Sarasota, FL
9—OLE ANDERSON
256, Minneapolis, MN
10—GINO HERNANDEZ
224, Houston, TX

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 150 wrestlers in 14 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

And now for something completely different ... In the January 1986 issue of *The Wrestler,* "Ratings Analysis" presented ratings for three categories not normally associated with ratings: managers, valets, and six-man tag teams.

Again looking for something else to rate, something in an unusual vein, we've decided to take a look at announcers.

Actually, announcers are eminently ratable. There are very good wrestling announcers and there are very bad wrestling announcers, and good reasons for any person being one or the other. The top 10 we've included here are ranked on the basis of several criteria.

First and foremost of those criteria is knowledge. An analyst of match action should be knowledgable enough to recognize that a particular wrestler has various strengths and weaknesses, and should recognize when those strengths and weaknesses come into play. The announcer should also know that the wrestler has a history of competition behind him. Several WWF announcers, for example, are notorious for ignoring the past of a wrestler who has just entered the region.

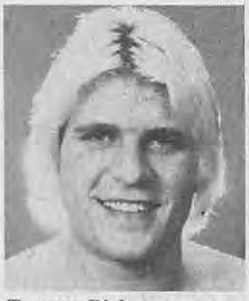
Other important criteria include delivery (how smoothly an individual speaks on the air, and how understandable the words are that he is saying), analysis (tying together diverse elements both of a wrestler's history and of current events in his career to provide a perspective on the individual), and objectivity (an announcer should not be overly partial to either popular or hated wrestlers).

Beneath each announcer's name we've included the area or areas for which they do commentary. No distinction is made between blow-by-blow or color commentators, as most wrestling announcers tend to do double duty in this area.

Joel Watts

ANNOUNCERS TOP 10

1—**JESSE VENTURA**
World Wrestling Federation
2—**TONY SCHIAVONE**
World Championship Wrestling
3—**GORDON SOLIE**
Florida & Continental areas
4—**JIM ROSS**
Mid-South Wrestling
5—**JOEL WATTS**
Mid-South Wrestling
6—**MARK LOWRENCE**
World Class Wrestling
7—**BRUNO SAMMARTINO**
World Wrestling Federation
8—**LANCE RUSSELL**
Mid-Southern Wrestling
9—**KEN RESNICK**
American Wrestling Association
10—**BILL MERCER**
World Class Wrestling



Tommy Rich

Hello, goodbye: This issue of *PWI* marks the first month that the Southwest area, also known as Continental Championship Wrestling, has been represented in our ratings system. Ranked under the heading "Continental," this category is now a permanent addition to our ratings system, replacing the "Missouri" ratings area. The number one position in the Continental ratings each month will automatically go to the Southeast Continental champion, who presently is Tommy Rich. By the way, from time to time we will continue to take a look at the Missouri rankings in a section of "Ratings Analysis."

Speaking of changes ... You might have noticed that starting last issue, a new look has been gracing the Top 10 and Tag Team categories on our ratings page. Extra large and bold numbers allow you to scan the listings from one through 10 with greater speed, and championship notations have been added to the Top 10 singles ratings in similar fashion to the way notations are made in the tag team category.

Why the change? Well, we want to emphasize that those two singles and tag team rating categories are compiled via decisions and discussions made among members of the *PWI* editorial board. These are *our* top 10 ratings, the best in the world as we see them.

By contrast, the other ratings categories are based on several variable criteria: surveys of wrestling fans, mail that arrives in our offices, current official positions of particular challengers to particular titles, and input from promoters, wrestlers, referees, and commission officials. Some titleholders receive automatic rankings in certain categories.

Not in the Top 10. There are no automatic rankings. When you're looking at "*PWI*'s Top 10," whether it be singles or tag teams, you can be assured that we're calling them exactly as we see them.

The address for mail: Don't just sit back and take our ratings at face value—SPEAK OUT! This is *your* magazine, and we are constantly trying to improve it to become the kind of publication *you* want to read. Nowhere is this taken more seriously than in the area of ratings. If you have ideas for a future "Ratings Analysis," if you want to see changes made in our ratings system, or if you simply want to complain about the ranking of your favorite star, let us know. Send your missives to: "Ratings Analysis" c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated;* Box 48, Rockville Centre, New York 11570. □

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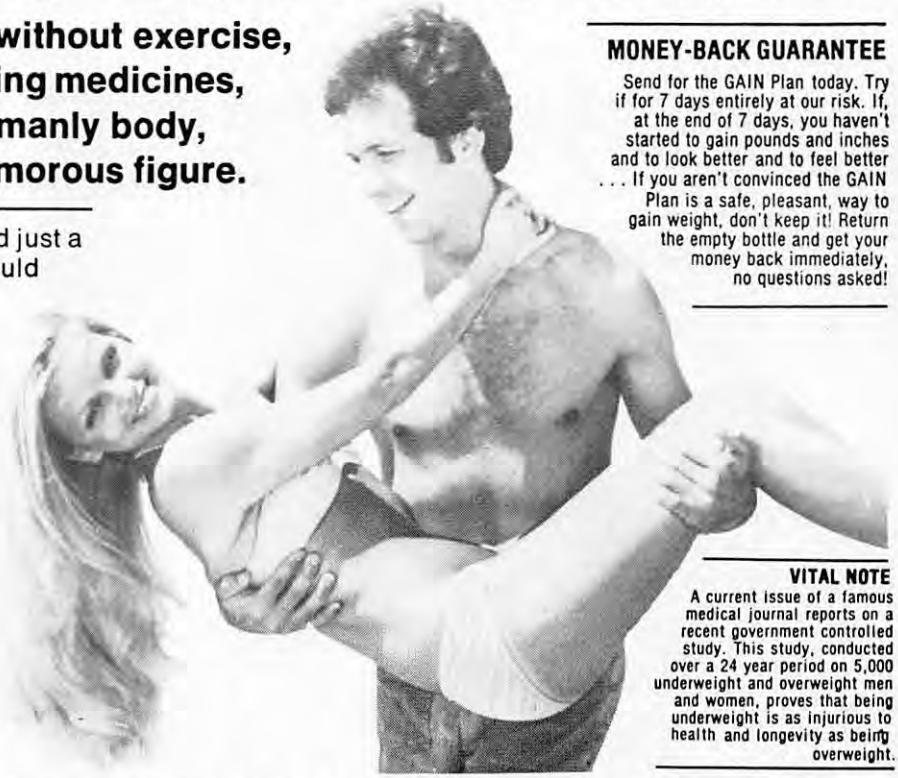

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VITAL NOTE

A current issue of a famous medical journal reports on a recent government controlled study. This study, conducted over a 24 year period on 5,000 underweight and overweight men and women, proves that being underweight is as injurious to health and longevity as being overweight.

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This exciting method is easy, pleasant, and medically sound beyond a shadow of a doubt, and your own Doctor could tell you the same thing.

HERE'S ALL YOU DO

Before meals, or whenever you feel like it, you take delicious, chewable, nutritionally fortified GAIN tablets and that's it! No other medication to take. Nothing difficult or unpleasant to do, and without even being aware of it, a wonderfully exciting change takes place.

Those high-calorie GAIN tablets are rich in body-building materials! They not only add weight themselves, but they sharpen your appetite! You look forward to mealtimes, and without even realizing it, you start to eat more and almost immediately the weight gaining process begins!

As you follow your GAIN Plan which includes nutritional high calorie menus. You add pounds and inches to your arms, legs, chest, hips, everywhere. You'll be amazed at the fantastic transformation that occurs . . . as thin, unattractive areas start to develop into new magnetic appeal. You'll be thrilled to discover that as you gain weight you will have more pep and energy for all the wonderful things in life!

SKINNY MEN AND WOMEN ARE NOT ATTRACTIVE

. . . a skinny, scrawny body is no asset in social or business life. Give the GAIN Plan a chance to help build you up and put firm flesh on you.

THINK OF WHAT THIS CAN MEAN TO YOU

If you are one of those unfortunate people who can't wear all the new high style clothes you want to wear . . . if you are ashamed of the way you look in a bathing suit . . . embarrassed because your legs are too thin and spindly . . . your chest is too flat . . . your arms aren't the full, rounded limbs they were meant to be . . . If you long for a more attractive-looking body, the safe, pleasant GAIN Plan can be the answer to your prayers!

Yes, now, with the GAIN Plan to help, it's so easy, so pleasant to add pounds and inches of firm, attractive flesh . . . so fulfilling to feel better, stronger, more vital and alive! But don't take our word for it. Prove it to yourself at our risk!

If you sincerely want to gain weight, and to look better and feel better as a result,

HERE IS OUR OFFER . . .

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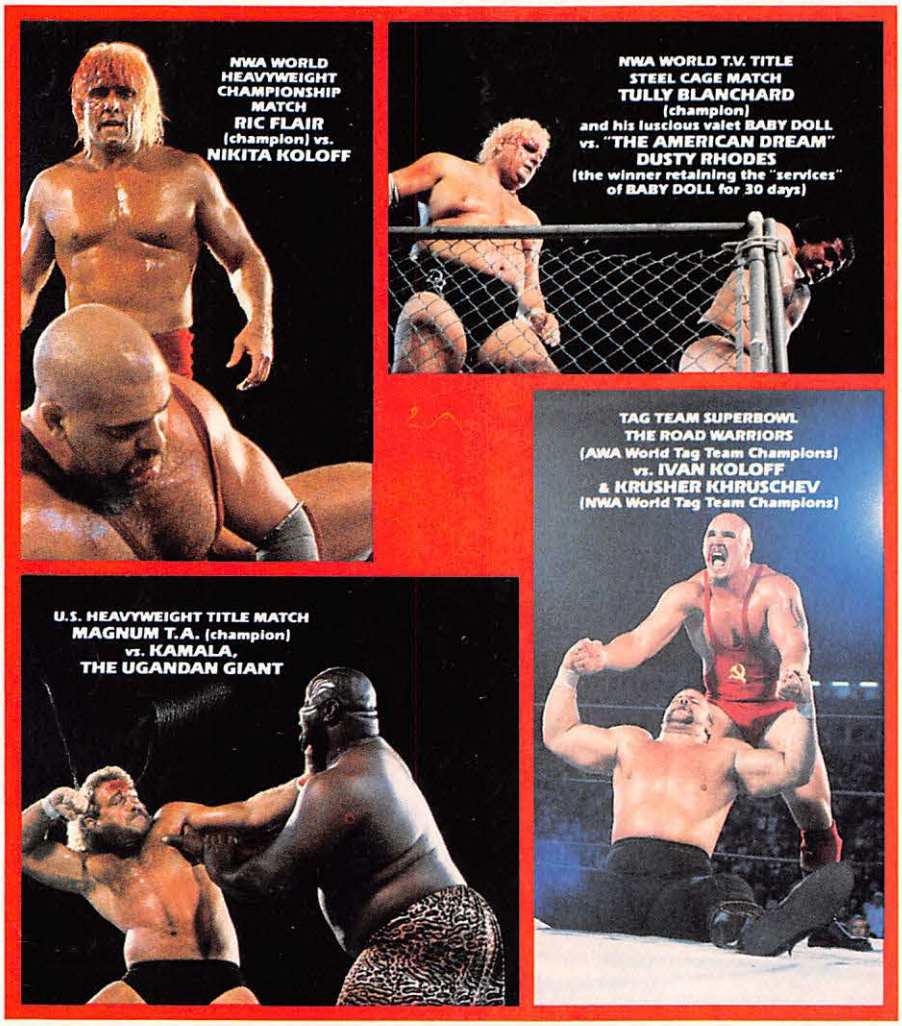

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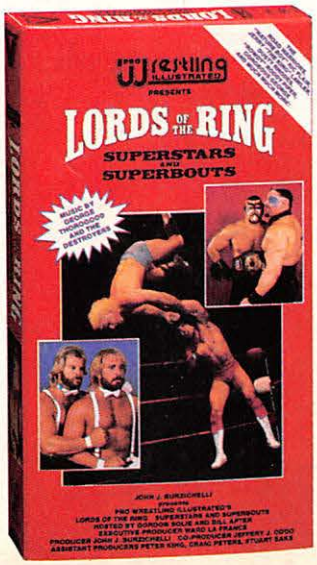

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